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# Land Use and Urban Design Guidelines



Thomas M. Menino, Mayor of Boston

Boston  
Redevelopment  
Authority  
Mark Maloney, Director  
Fenway Planning  
Task Force

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Fenway Special Study Areas  
Final Report

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# Boston Redevelopment Authority

## Dear Friends of the Fenway:

It gives me great pleasure to present this *Fenway Special Study Areas Final Report* to you. Over two years ago, Fenway residents, businesses and community organizations joined together with the City of Boston and the Boston Redevelopment Authority to plan for the future of this neighborhood and to begin the process of rezoning the Fenway area. This report is the product of a diverse community working together to determine its quality of life for today and for the future.

This document would not have been possible without the contribution and dedication of the members of the Fenway Planning Task Force and its able chair, Joseph Barton. Thank you for sharing your thoughtful comments and valuable time in the many community meetings and for your commitment to work for the future of the neighborhood.

The Fenway neighborhood is a unique residential community that also hosts many important Boston institutions and establishments that contribute to the life and diversity of the city. They include many museums, hospitals, universities, Fenway Park, and Lansdowne Street as well as the Fens. This unique blend of uses and resources brings together many competing interests and powerful social and economic forces: the desire to reinforce residential uses and open spaces; the need for institutional and commercial development; and, the possible expansion of the ballpark.

As you will see in this report, the unique set of challenges presented by these diverse interests have been addressed in a balanced and thoughtful manner. The report recommends a strategy for growth in four distinct sub-districts in which residential and commercial uses can flourish and grow in harmony. A detailed set of urban design guidelines builds on the neighborhood's existing urban character and provides a plan for the

investment of public and private funds into the public realm through the construction of boulevards, open spaces, and public transportation improvements. Most importantly, the report proposes innovative zoning incentives to encourage residential development and affordable housing that will strengthen the diverse residential base of the neighborhood.

An important reminder is that this document represents the expression of neighborhood concerns and considerations at one moment in time. A major element of discussion in the West Fenway was the potential construction of a new ballpark adjacent to the existing Fenway Park. The recent sale of the Boston Red Sox leaves the future of the ballpark plan unclear. While this document is static, the plans that are captured within are organic and will continue to grow and adapt with the neighborhood.

Although not all of the many complex issues have been fully resolved, this report lays a solid foundation for further discussion and is an invaluable record of the community's desires as we extend our cooperative planning process in East Fenway. While it is only the first step in the City's effort to rezone the area, I encourage all of you to remain engaged in this process and look forward to continuing our important work together.

Sincerely,



Mark Maloney,  
Director



To: **Fenway Planning Task Force (FPTF)**  
Re: **Comments on West Fenway Zoning Guidelines**

The West Fenway Zoning Guidelines were sent to more than 1,000 people on our mailing list and were published in the January edition of the Back Bay Courant. They were presented and reviewed at several Public community meetings.

During the past 2 years, 35 public meetings— including two community-wide workshops— have been hosted by the Fenway Planning Task Force and its sub-committees to develop, review, and obtain input on the proposed guidelines. Hundreds of people participated in this process and their input has significantly shaped the final document.

The FPTF received a significant number of public comments on the draft urban design guidelines. Most reflect issues that were discussed in depth in the Urban Design Subcommittee meetings. In the give and take and discussion in the Subcommittee, a consensus was reached that was reflected in the draft urban design guidelines that were reviewed in December. Upon reviewing the submitted comments, there were a number of areas that the full FPTF reviewed and refined with full open public comment and discussion. The final West Fenway Zoning Guidelines received the consensus approval of the FPTF membership. In an open, public process, no one gets everything that they want. We have all had to compromise to find a consensus. The West Fenway Zoning Guidelines represent an overwhelming consensus of the Fenway community on zoning recommendations. However, there were 2 issues where there was substantial division in the community on the guidelines, the zoning for a baseball park and the acceptance of the Planned Development Area (PDA) process. When writing the final zoning, both sides of these issues need to be considered and addressed.

I would like to publicly thank the members of the FPTF for their participation and interest in this process. Also, without a high level of interest and participation on the part of the public, the whole process would have been futile. I can't thank enough the private citizens who gave their time and energy to this process. Only as a result of the active participation of the FPTF and the public were we able to produce the highest quality advice that is represented in the West Fenway Zoning Guidelines.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joe Barton". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a distinct "B".

Joe Barton,  
CHAIR of the West Fenway Planning Process

# FENWAY SPECIAL STUDY AREA

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**Proposed Streetscape: Brookline Avenue**



# ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

## **BACKGROUND**

The Fenway Planning Task Force (FPTF) and members of the public who live, work, and play in the West Fenway neighborhood have been working with the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), Boston Transportation Department (BTD), and its consultants on a comprehensive set of land use, density, height, and urban design recommendations for the neighborhood. This set of community recommendations will be considered by the BRA in its drafting of new zoning for the area, which will require formal adoption by the Zoning Commission before any new regulations can take effect.

The existing zoning has been in place since the late 1950s. Development pressures from proposals for a new ballpark, Massachusetts Turnpike air rights development, and several large mixed-use projects under construction or being planned have provided the impetus to establish new zoning and urban design guidelines that would reflect the community's own idea of the appropriate scale and character of new development and the 'public realm.

In May 2000, the BRA worked with the FPTF to establish an Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) and initiated the effort to solicit community views regarding rezoning. The FPTF Urban Design and Transportation subcommittees have been guiding two concurrent studies that have established the framework for the rezoning and the transportation plan and identified the overall community goals for urban design and new zoning. Public workshops, walking tours, a

hands-on "neighborhood building" exercise, and work sessions held in the Fenway have guided the BRA and its consultants in the preparation of these recommendations.

This document sets forth the general goals of various participants, often with differing views, on appropriate new zoning for the West Fenway area. However, it responds to community and business desires for new zoning and urban design guidelines that provide a better living and working environment for Fenway residents and visitors, and promote aesthetic and streetscape improvements that enhance the public realm.

## **PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER**

These zoning recommendations propose a series of changes, additions, and clarifications to the zoning for the Special Study Areas in the West Fenway. A portion of the Special Study Areas, Lower Boylston Street, should retain the existing zoning classifications that seem to be appropriate for the size, scale, and function of that sub-area. However, this study recommends a number of new urban design and streetscape improvement guidelines and general short-term maintenance actions for Lower Boylston Street to address long standing pedestrian safety and aesthetic issues, and to better integrate Lower Boylston Street into the East Fens.

The community expressed on numerous occasions that it wants to see Boylston Street relate more closely to the West Fens residential neighborhood — specially the south side immediately adjacent — while ensuring the residential area is protected. The following changes to the zoning and urban design guidelines for the Special Study Areas are recommended:

- Distinctive zoning subdistricts
- Pedestrian Improvements
- Encouraged, allowed, and discouraged land uses
- Floor-area ratio (density)
- Building height
- Building setbacks
- Street wall continuity
- Open space
- Maximum sizes for single first-floor retail stores
- Automobile and bicycle parking

The recommendations respond in part to community desires, existing zoning requirements, urban design and planning principles, and best practices. Key issues raised in response to the draft conceptual plan discussed at the FPTF meeting in August 2000 have also been addressed and include the following:

- Zoning and urban design guidelines that are applicable with or without a new ballpark
- Maximum height limits above the interim 60-foot IPOD limit, and guidelines that encourage variations in building height
- Clarification of the types of uses that should be encouraged in a mixed-use development
- The amount of useable open space that is required for residential developments
- Guidelines for new parcels of land that will be created if/when Fenway Park moves
- Clarification of FAR limits to promote and control density
- Revisions to the proposed Gateway Overlay Districts
- Incentives to promote residential development
- Incentives to promote on-site affordable housing
- Transportation implications of new development
- Proposed incentives for transportation innovations



## **STUDY PROCESS**

The proposed zoning and urban design guidelines for the West Fenway represent a significant shift from the underlying zoning of the late 1950s that was dominated by manufacturing and low-density business uses. (See figure #1 – Existing Zoning) They are also different from the IPOD, which established a single interim zoning regulation over the entire district with the exception of allowing PDAs for large parcels in the area north of Boylston Street. Although the consultant team responded to comments and suggestions from the FPTF and the public in developing these proposals through an iterative process, these recommendations are subject to additional review and modification in the upcoming public hearing process.

These proposals have been reviewed and discussed at Urban Design Subcommittee and full Fenway Planning Task Force meetings, starting in the fall of 2000 and continuing through early 2001. The final plan and guidelines will be presented to the BRA, who will draft final zoning recommendations.

## **A New ‘West Fenway District’**

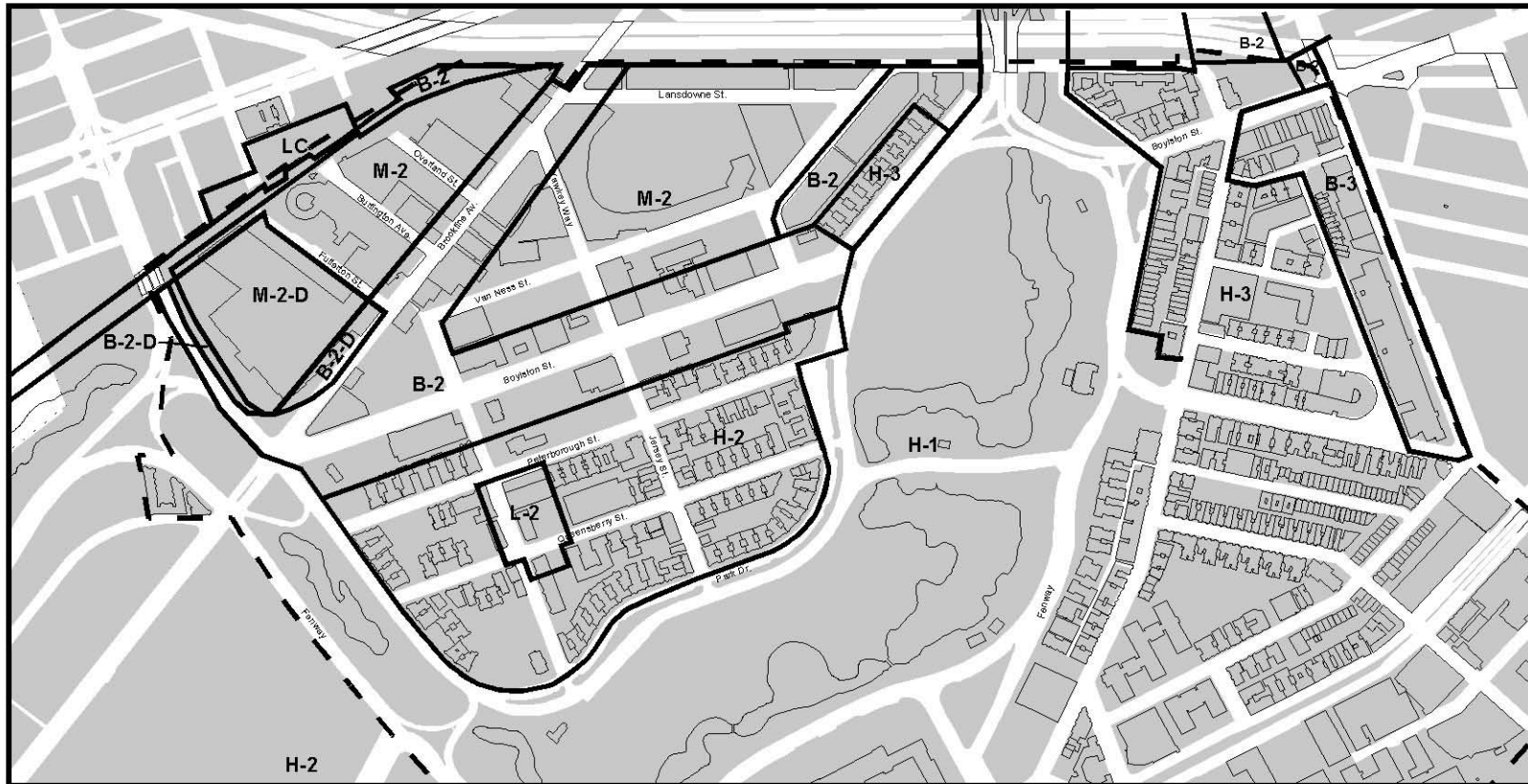
West Fenway functions essentially as a unified business and commercial area. However, the consulting team identified three distinct zoning subdistricts within West Fenway, each with different permissible uses and design vocabulary appropriate to the development goals of the City and neighborhood.

During the course of the study, the Urban Design Subcommittee stressed that both sides of Boylston Street should relate to the residential neighborhood, not only the south side. As a result, a fourth subdistrict was added – identified as the Fenway North Boylston Neighborhood — that essentially allows for uses similar to the Fenway South Boylston Neighborhood, while providing greater flexibility in height and other dimensional regulations.

The four proposed subdistricts within the overall “West Fenway District” are: (See figure #2 – Proposed Zoning Subdistricts)

- Fenway South Boylston Neighborhood
- Fenway North Boylston Neighborhood
- Fenway Triangle Mixed-Use; and
- Brookline Avenue Commercial

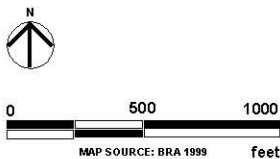
Figure 1: Existing Zoning



# Fenway Special Study Areas

Boston Redevelopment Authority

Zoning

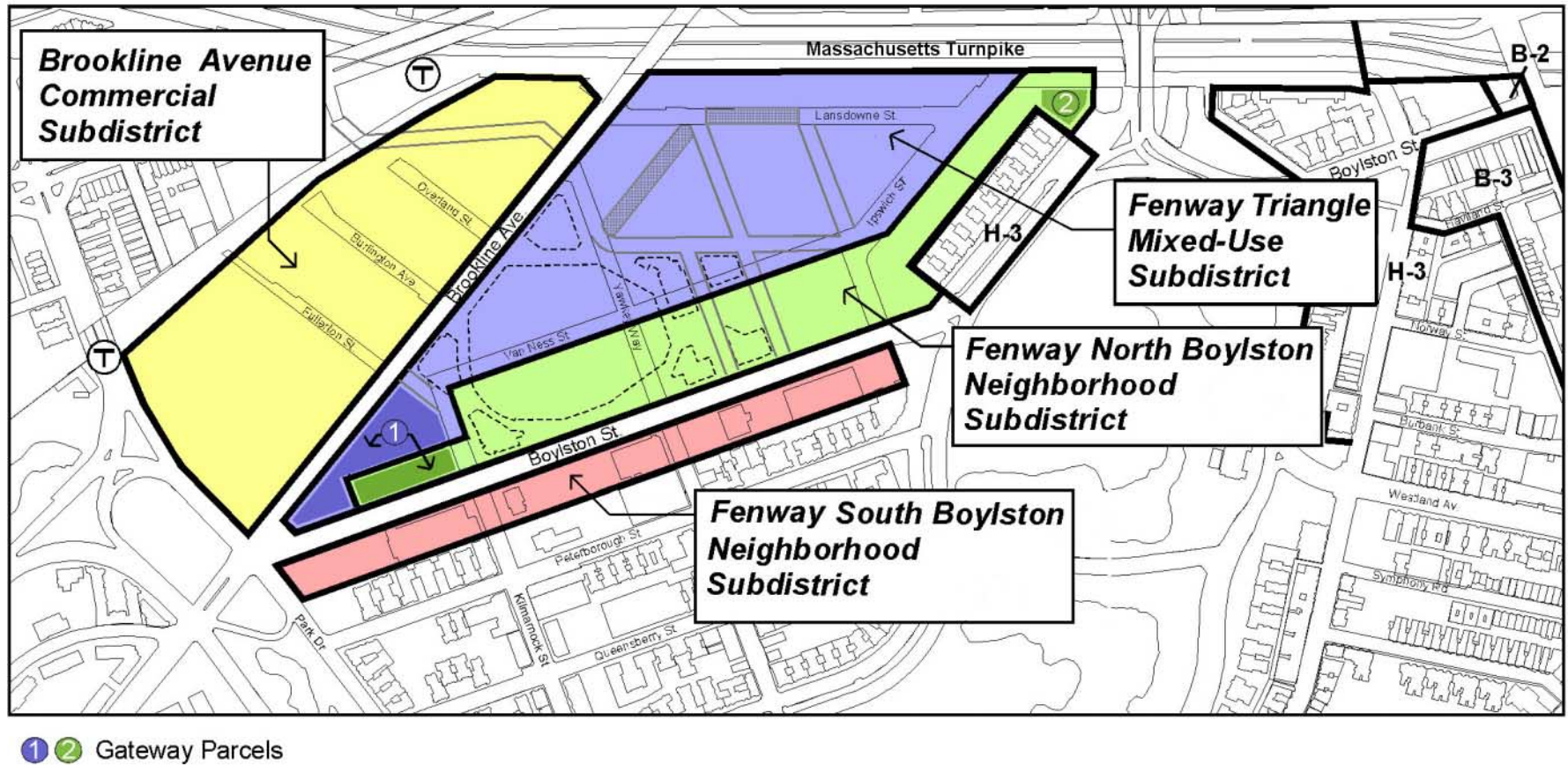


Key:  
**B** - General Business  
**M** - Restricted Manufacturing  
**H** - Residential: Apartment  
**D** - Planned Development Area  
**L** - IP0D Boundary



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Figure 2: Proposed Zoning SubDistricts





The new zoning and urban design concept for the study area will provide some certainty of overall scale of development and array of uses, while leaving enough flexibility for changing market dynamics and public preferences. The new zoning being recommended is based on achieving the following goals:

**Diversity** — both visually and functionally, to help engage people in a meaningful way to a varied mix of experiences, including opportunities for walking, social and civic interaction, shopping, work, and pursuit of recreational and cultural activities.

**Uniformity of Scale, where appropriate** — to ensure that the Special Study Areas can be viewed both as a set of “subdistricts,” each with its own intrinsic qualities, but all sharing some consistency of overall scale and intensity of use.

**Selected Opportunities for Development Flexibility** — to enable the City and neighborhood to judiciously foster unique and highly imageable development at key entrances and gateways to the subdistricts.

**Districts vs. Corridors** — The initial “Special Study Areas” were conceived as a series of corridors — Boylston Street, Brookline Avenue, and Lansdowne Street. The current zoning recommendations divide the study area into four contiguous districts, with an accompanying set of urban design guidelines for each of the street corridors.

## **Sustainable Development**

While beyond the scope of a neighborhood study, the principles of sustainable development should become integrated with zoning and building codes. This would help to ensure that new construction and redevelopment projects minimize impacts on the environment and minimize utility costs for future owners and occupants. This goal, however, is better addressed at a broader municipal or state level, rather than at the neighborhood level.

The Massachusetts Legislature is currently considering a bill to grant tax credits to developers who integrate green design into development. A similar bill has been passed in New York State. The Massachusetts bill is using the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED guidelines as a standard. These guidelines promote the principle of sustainability in all areas, including transportation.

## **The Zoning Concept**

The following section provides a detailed description of the overall zoning concept, and the specific characteristics and attributes of each of the four subdistricts. Specific development standards as well as incentives to help achieve community and city goals are suggested. The consulting team, in preparing its recommendations, reviewed other City zoning approaches, including the Midtown Cultural District, Chinatown District, and various other neighborhood district plans. However, the recommendations that follow have been custom-designed for the special characteristics of the Fenway Special Study Areas.

A summary table comparing the density and dimensional standards for each subdistrict follows the narrative description.

## **WEST FENWAY DISTRICT**

It is envisioned that this district be composed of four subdistricts. The first subdistrict, “**Fenway South Boylston Neighborhood Subdistrict**,” permits and encourages mixed-use development, combining housing and commercial uses, and neighborhood-related business uses.

The second subdistrict, “**Fenway North Boylston Neighborhood Subdistrict**,” mirrors the South Boylston Street Neighborhood Subdistrict in terms of uses, but allows greater flexibility in height and other regulations because it is not immediately adjacent to the residential neighborhood.

The “**Fenway Triangle Mixed-Use Subdistrict**” permits and encourages a dynamic professional, arts, and recreational environment; and the adjacent fourth subdistrict, “**Brookline Avenue Commercial Subdistrict**,” recognizes existing land uses and permits an array of commercial and entertainment uses, including office, educational, institutional, and research-related uses. The division of the larger area into subdistricts is consistent with other neighborhood zoning districts in the City of Boston.

Listed on the following pages is a more detailed, conceptual description of the four subdistricts. Each subdistrict reflects the recommended (although not exhaustive) listing of uses to be permitted, conditionally allowed, or prohibited. Additionally, each subdistrict includes the applicable density, bulk, and dimensional requirements envisioned.

## FENWAY SOUTH BOYLSTON NEIGHBORHOOD SUBDISTRICT



### Goals/Purpose of District:

This subdistrict permits an array of land uses and promotes pedestrian friendly, mixed-use development, including the encouragement of diverse housing opportunities, neighborhood-oriented business, retail, and service uses.

### District Boundaries:

Includes all property within the special study area located on the south side of Boylston Street that is presently zoned B-2, extending from the intersection of Boylston Street with Brookline Avenue, continuing easterly to Ipswich Street.

### Principal Uses to be Encouraged and Allowed:

Residential uses such as multifamily dwellings, affordable housing units, affordable artists' live/work space, hotels of 200 rooms or less, educational uses, community uses, day care, government office, health clubs, general offices (when composing no more than 35 percent-40 percent of the gross floor area of a building), galleries, local retail and service uses primarily serving neighborhood needs, restaurants (excluding drive-in uses), compatible accessory uses.

### Principal Uses to be Discouraged or Prohibited:

Wholesale business and storage, institutional uses, industrial uses, repair garages, bars, gasoline service stations, non-accessory parking and vehicle storage and service uses.



## **FENWAY NORTH BOYLSTON NEIGHBORHOOD SUBDISTRICT**



### **Goals/Purpose of District:**

This subdistrict permits an array of land uses and promotes pedestrian friendly, mixed-use development, including the encouragement of diverse housing opportunities, neighborhood-oriented business, retail, and service uses.

### **District Boundaries:**

Includes all property within the special study area located on the north side of Boylston Street extending from the intersection of Boylston Street at the 1st Gateway Parcel, where the depth extends to Van Ness St and continues east between Ipswich St and Boylston St (excluding the currently zoned H-3 subdistrict) This subdistrict also includes Gateway Parcel #2.

### **Principal Uses to be Encouraged and Allowed:**

Residential uses such as multifamily dwellings, affordable housing units, affordable artists' live/work space, hotels of 200 rooms or less, educational uses, community uses, day care, government office, health clubs, general offices (when composing no more than 35 percent-40 percent of the gross floor area of a building), galleries, local retail and service uses primarily serving neighborhood needs, restaurants (excluding drive-in uses), ballpark, compatible accessory uses.

### **Principal Uses to be Discouraged or Prohibited:**

Wholesale business and storage, industrial uses, repair garages, gasoline service stations, bars, non-accessory parking and vehicle storage and service uses.

### **Conditional Uses**

Institutional uses should be conditional uses in this subdistrict. Such uses would generally be subject to the review and approval of an Institutional Master Plan.

## FENWAY TRIANGLE MIXED-USE SUBDISTRICT



### Goals/Purpose of District:

This subdistrict allows an array of land uses and promotes pedestrian friendly, mixed-use development, cultural, arts, media-related, and recreational uses, and a variety of retail, residential, service, and accessory uses that complement the principal uses that are encouraged.

### District Boundaries:

Includes the properties located on the north side of Boylston Street that are presently zoned M-2, and all property that is south of Brookline Avenue that is currently zoned B-2, from the intersection of Brookline and Boylston Street to the intersection of Brookline Avenue and the Massachusetts Turnpike. It excludes the properties that are currently zoned M-2 that are south of Van Ness Street. It also excludes certain parcels located in the proposed new gateway parcel in the new North Boylston Neighborhood Subdistrict.

### Principal Uses to be Encouraged and Allowed:

Residential uses such as multifamily dwellings, affordable housing units, affordable artists' live/work space, hotel, educational uses, day care, health clubs, government office, general office, local retail (excluding automotive-related business); galleries, museums, recording, film or drama studios, recreational and community uses, ballpark, array of restaurant and entertainment uses, and compatible accessory uses.

### Principal Uses to be Conditionally Permitted:

Parking garage, parking lot, research and development uses.

### Principal Uses to be Discouraged or Prohibited:

Wholesale business and storage, industrial use, auto-related use, selected vehicle storage and service uses.

## **BROOKLINE AVENUE COMMERCIAL SUBDISTRICT**



### **Purposes/Goals of District:**

This sub-district largely recognizes the character of existing land use, which includes medical, educational, entertainment, restaurants, institutional and office-related use, and retail uses that are compatible with surrounding land uses and buildings.

### **District Boundaries:**

Properties with frontage along the north side of Brookline Avenue, and extending east to the Turnpike right-of-way, and along the railroad and MBTA right-of-way to the west up to Park Drive, including properties to the rear of Brookline Avenue, presently zoned B-2, B-2-D, and properties zoned M-2 and M-2-D.

### **Principal Uses to be Encouraged and Allowed:**

Residential uses such as multifamily dwellings, affordable housing units, affordable artists' live/work space, hotels, educational uses, day car, health clubs, government office, general office, local retail (excluding automotive-related business); ballpark, galleries, museums, recording, film or drama studios, recreational and community uses, array of restaurant and entertainment uses, and compatible accessory uses.

### **Principal Uses to be Conditionally Permitted:**

Parking garage, parking lot, research and development uses.

### **Principal Uses to be Discouraged or Prohibited:**

Auto-related uses, heavy industrial uses, storage, drive-in restaurants.



## GATEWAY PARCELS



### Purposes/Goals of Gateway Parcels:

The Gateway Parcels superimpose a special planning area at certain entrances to the West Fenway District, enabling the City to grant increased density and/or height to unique projects that advance design and use objectives of the entire district.

In order to grant such density and/or height increase, projects must demonstrate exemplary design, including well-considered massing and detailing in response to exceptional site and environmental considerations.

### Parcels:

1. Parcel at the convergence of Brookline Avenue and Boylston Street, extending to Kilmarnock Street.
2. Ipswich Street from Charlesgate West/Bowker Overpass to corner property at Ipswich opposite Lansdowne Street.

### Density and Dimensional Standards:

Gateway Overlay Parcels are governed by the use regulations, density, and dimensional requirements applicable to the underlying district, except that a base FAR of 6.0 and building height of 12 stories, or 120 feet is allowed. Additional height and/or density may be permitted, as noted above, subject to design review.

## **PLANNED DEVELOPMENT AREAS (PDAs)**

The task force did not reach consensus on the subject of Planned Development Areas (PDAs). PDAs allow complex projects on parcels larger than an acre to undergo a special city and community review process where all the relevant planning and design tradeoffs can be addressed as a whole. This community process can lead to zoning amendments based on an approved development plan, which can then be adopted by the BRA and the Zoning Commission. While the majority of Fenway Planning Task Force members supported the use of PDAs in some of the new zoning subdistricts of the West Fenway, some members were unable to join the majority on this issue to reach consensus. Opinions regarding PDAs were also mixed amongst the public participating in this community process. Proponents of PDAs point to the flexibility this zoning tool gives to the neighborhood in its consideration of special projects in the same way as the proposed Gateway Parcel designations, while opponents are concerned that the PDA review process gives so much latitude that it may render zoning irrelevant.

The PDA process is a more streamlined alternative to seeking zoning variances through the Board of Appeal, which can be lengthy and unpredictable. The majority of the Task Force felt that PDAs would be a useful designation in the commercial subdistricts to encourage development in the areas along Boylston Street now consisting of auto-related uses and surface parking lots.

Task Force members opposed to PDAs feel that developers will take advantage of this designation to disregard zoning regulations and propose development incompatible with the residential neighborhoods adjacent to these commercial subdistricts.

Acknowledging that the greater community did not come to a consensus on the use of PDAs, the consulting team is nonetheless recommend-

ing, for the benefit of future discussions, that PDA designations be limited to the North Boylston Street Neighborhood Subdistrict, the Fenway Triangle Mixed-use Subdistrict, and the Brookline Commercial Subdistrict and adopt the following set of dimensional guidelines. These guidelines have been modified from the interim PDA guidelines set forth in the Fenway IPOD, to conform to the dimensional guidelines developed in the course of this study. It will be incumbent upon the City and the BRA to insist on development in this area to be compatible with the following guidelines reached by Task Force Consensus.

### **Dimensional Guidelines for PDAs:**

As set forth in the applicable PDA Development Plan, subject to the following guidelines:

**Building Height Guidelines:** 100 feet

**Street Wall Height:** 75 feet

**Stepback above Street Wall Height:** 15 feet

**Maximum FAR:** 6.0

**Parking Guidelines:**

- 0.75 spaces per unit residential (minimum/maximum)
- 0.75 spaces per 1,000 gross sq. ft. (GSF) for commercial maximum (no minimum requirement)

*The preceding Dimensional Guidelines for PDA apply to any PDA Development Plan containing land in the Fenway Study Area unless the Boston Redevelopment Authority, with the advice of the Fenway Planning Task Force, finds that different dimensions and parking requirements would not be detrimental to the welfare of the neighborhood.*

ENTERTAINMENT USES IN THE  
NEW ZONING DISTRICTS

The FPTF and community members expressed a strong desire to extend the Fenway South Boylston Neighborhood Subdistrict zoning concept, which, as currently proposed, forbids stand-alone bars or entertainment uses, to the north side of Boylston Street as well. This request has resulted in the creation of a fourth zoning subdistrict, the Fenway North Boylston Neighborhood Subdistrict, which prohibits such bars and entertainment uses within the frontage properties along the north side of Boylston Street, extending back approximately 250 feet to the current location of Van Ness Street.

These prohibitions draw upon a number of existing approaches within the Boston Zoning Code. In Article 8 of the Boston Zoning Code, “Regulation of Uses,” the treatment of Eating Places and Entertainment is subject to different treatment and scrutiny by the City. Specifically, restaurants serving food and drink to seated patrons (Use #37), without entertainment or music, are permissible in many of the City’s commercial districts. However, places for the consumption of food and beverages (Use #38), providing entertainment and dancing, including theatres, concert halls, and pool rooms, are separately itemized from

basic restaurants, thereby enabling the City to forbid or conditionally authorize such uses, based on its discretion. Both use numbers 37 and 38 are currently permitted in the B-2 district that bounds much of the Boylston Street area in the West Fenway.

When crafting a final zoning amendment for this area, the City could subject restaurant and entertainment uses to differing treatment, potentially permitting or conditionally permitting restaurants, while forbidding certain entertainment uses entirely.

Many of the City’s neighborhood zoning districts, including the Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District, East Boston Neighborhood District, Jamaica Plain Neighborhood District, and North End Neighborhood District, have their own special use regulation schedule. Some of these use regulations specify hours of operation for selected restaurants with or without live entertainment. This approach ensures that neighborhood zoning districts have use regulations that can match neighborhood planning objectives. Additionally, there seems to be precedent for establishing size or floor area thresholds in the City’s zoning districts, for either additional regulatory scrutiny or use limitation.

Selected Entertainment Uses	Fenway South Boylston Subdistrict	Fenway North Boylston Subdistrict	Fenway Triangle Mixed-Use Subdistrict	Brookline Avenue Commercial Subdistrict
Bar	Forbidden	Forbidden	Permitted	Permitted
Bar with live entertainment	Forbidden	Forbidden	Permitted to midnight; Conditional to 1AM	Permitted to midnight; Conditional to 1AM
Restaurant with live entertainment	Permitted to midnight; Conditional to 1AM	Permitted to midnight; Conditional to 1AM	Permitted to midnight; Conditional to 1AM	Permitted to midnight; Conditional to 1AM

Provided below is a small table reflecting how the City could treat and denote selected entertainment uses in the four neighborhood subdistricts. The South and North Boylston subdistricts can be viewed as a response to the discussion in October with the Fenway Planning Task Force about extending the boundaries of the proposed Boylston Street Neighborhood Shopping District to the opposite side of the street. The South Boylston Neighborhood Subdistrict would be essentially the same concept that the consulting team previously proposed as the “Boylston Street Neighborhood Shopping District.”

The North Boylston Neighborhood Subdistrict is an extension of this concept, with respect to allowed uses, to the frontage properties along the north side of Boylston Street, with somewhat but not much more flexibility. The previously proposed “Arts and Entertainment Subdistrict” is reduced in size and designated as the Fenway Triangle Mixed-Use Subdistrict.

In other respects, the North Boylston Subdistrict shares dimensional standards (such as allowable building height) with the Fenway Triangle Mixed-Use Subdistrict. These standards are relaxed from those proposed for the South Boylston Subdistrict in that they relate to potentially larger — and deeper — parcels of land, and do not directly border the existing West Fens residential district.

Regulating entertainment uses becomes a bit more complicated if the City wishes to nurture cultural uses, including arts and musical performance space, while limiting establishments that serve alcoholic beverages. Nonetheless, careful review and denotation of any final use regulation will enable the community and the BRA to address this challenge.

## TRANSPORTATION IMPLICATIONS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Transportation implications of new development in the Fenway have been considered by Vollmer Associates in a parallel study. Development impacts on transportation (pedestrian, auto, bicycle, and transit) and parking infrastructure were considered. The details of this transportation plan are included in a separate report prepared by Vollmer Associates, the *Fenway Neighborhood Transportation Plan*.

### Trip Generation

It is estimated that close to 3.7 million sq. ft. (2.6 million net increase because it will replace approx. 0.9 MSF existing development) of new development, including the recently proposed Fenway Mixed-Use Project, could occur in the West Fenway area under the proposed new zoning, which would permit considerably higher density than what exists now. Higher-density development produces more trips. In addition to different land uses having different trip-generation rates, land uses generate trips at varying times of day, affecting the most congested peak-period traffic differently. For example, one-third of office trips occur in peak hours while only one of five retail trips occurs in peak hours.

The challenge is to determine what land uses and densities can be accommodated by the transportation system, and what improvements to the street, transit, and pedestrian system need to be made to meet future demand.

The *Fenway Neighborhood Transportation Plan* provides a detailed discussion of the anticipated “modal split,” which is the estimate of trips, broken down into pedestrian, bike, transit, and vehicle modes, and evaluates the corresponding traffic impacts for the Fenway neighborhood.



### **Parking Regulations**

The following standards have been agreed to in the parallel planning process being undertaken by the BRA, BTDD, and Neighborhood Transportation Association, which served as the Transportation Subcommittee:

- 0.75 spaces per unit residential (minimum/maximum)
- 0.75 spaces per 1,000 gross sq. ft. (GSF) maximum for commercial (no minimum requirement)

### **Parking Issues**

Off-street parking is a basic element for maintaining a viable neighborhood commercial and residential area. The West Fenway's proximity to public transportation and employment centers that can be accessed by walking or bicycling helps reduce the demand for parking by providing alternatives to driving and auto-ownership.

Nevertheless, off-street parking for new development is necessary to ensure its financial viability, and to prevent residential streets from becoming completely overloaded with automobiles.

If approximately 1400 new housing units were built under a general FAR of 4.0 throughout the West Fenway District (including the Fenway Mixed-Use Project already proposed), about 1050 new parking spaces would be required to meet the proposed residential parking requirements.

If 1.8 million sq. ft. of office and 437,000 sq. ft. of retail space were developed, up to 928 new off-street parking spaces could be required. For practical purposes, it is reasonable to assume that the maximum allowable amount of parking would be built to meet parking demand.

### **Parking Bonus Incentives**

A potential Bonus Incentive for further discussion might be called a Transportation Innovation Incentive. The very tight restrictions on off-street parking being recommended for the Fenway reflect the neighborhood's desire to discourage car ownership, and reduce air pollution from heavy vehicular use.



The Transportation Innovation Incentive Bonus could be established to encourage the use of shared-use (or "utility") vehicles, alternative fuel vehicles, and vehicles dedicated to carpools. The Bonus would allow a small increase in the number of parking spaces within any new development dedicated for the parking of these vehicles.

The concept of shared-use vehicles (not to be confused with shared parking arrangements) is to provide residents access to conveniently-located vehicles for relatively short periods of time (such as an hour or two) at very inexpensive rates of less than \$10 an hour through a membership program. This concept is well-established in Europe, especially in Holland and Switzerland, and is now being tested in this country.

Locally, Zipcar has been placing their shared-use vehicles in reserved spaces in public parking lots in Cambridge and Brookline; there is already one such vehicle in the Fenway, located in the Star Market parking lot. Convenient access to shared-use vehicles in the neighborhood, in public or private parking areas, might be an amenity for residents, and reduce the need to own a car, or a second car. The use of alternative fuel (including electric) vehicles, while more of an individual decision, would also serve to reduce the negative impacts of car ownership on the environment.

To encourage these innovative transportation alternatives, it is proposed that an increase of 5% in the number of parking spaces, up to a total of 10 spaces, be allowed for any single development, provided these spaces are reserved for shared-use, carpool, and/or alternative fuel vehicles.

As is currently the case with dedicated carpool vehicle spaces, the provision of these additional dedicated parking spaces would be subject to a Transportation Access Plan Agreement (TAPA) between the development proponent and the Boston Transportation Department, and to the enforcement provisions of the agreement.

## **ABOUT THE BALLPARK**

During the course of this Zoning and Urban Design Study, legislation relative to the construction and financing of public infrastructure and other improvements around a new ballpark in the Fenway was enacted by the Commonwealth. The legislation acknowledges the City's position that Fenway, which has been the home of the Red Sox for nearly 100 years, is still the best location for a new ballpark. In addition, the legislation allows for further design changes to the current Red Sox proposal, so long as it is constructed within the ballpark development area proposed in the legislation. The construction of a new ballpark would provide 100 million dollars for enhancement of streets and public transportation.

The Task Force was unable to reach consensus on whether a ballpark should be an allowed use in the North Boylston Street Neighborhood Subdistrict. A majority of the Task Force felt that the Red Sox should have the opportunity to expand their current facility into this subdistrict provided they conform to the urban design guidelines proposed in this document for Boylston Street. This majority also felt that a new

stadium would eliminate surface parking lots, provide pedestrian and streetscape improvements and reduce many of the impacts of the existing stadium on the neighborhood.

Some of the members of the Task Force who could not join in consensus on the ballpark issue feel that the Red Sox should remain in the Fenway through the expansion and renovation of their existing facility. The dissenting members believe the scale of the proposed stadium is too large to be located directly on Boylston Street and would further promote development incompatible with an adjacent residential neighborhood. In addition, they are also concerned that expanding attendance to around 44,000 would negate the effect of the infrastructure improvements that would be made with the construction of the new ballpark for an area already over burdened with traffic from the rapidly expanding Longwood Medical Area that has an inadequate transit system.

The Task Force did not address the specifics of the ballpark legislation including how the Red Sox would acquire the proposed site, finance the development costs and the historical significance of the Fenway Park. However, this study addresses in general terms the potential urban design opportunities and impacts of a new ballpark in Fenway, although the urban design recommendations here are applicable irrespective of the construction of a new ballpark.

## DENSITY AND DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

	<b>Fenway South Boylston Neighborhood</b>	<b>Fenway North Boylston Neighborhood</b>	<b>Fenway Triangle Mixed- Use</b>	<b>Brookline Avenue Commercial</b>
<b>Floor Area Ratio (FAR):</b> <i>FAR is increased from the current zoning of 2.0 to 4.0 to promote redevelopment of this area.</i>	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
<b>Building Height:</b>	6 stories or 75 feet <i>Additional height can be added through the Bonus Incentives.</i>	8 stories or 95 feet <i>Additional height can be added through Bonus Incentives and the Gateway Parcel overlays.</i>	8 stories or 95 feet <i>Additional height can be added through Bonus Incentives and the Gateway Parcel overlay.</i>	8 stories or 95 feet
<b>Building Setback from Sidewalk:</b>	15 feet	15 feet	15 feet at Boylston St. none at Brookline Ave. none at Lansdowne St. none at all other streets	none
<b>Rear Yard Setback:</b>	20 feet	None Except 20 feet where abutting H-3 Subdistrict	None      None	
<b>Usable Open Space:</b> <i>(applies only to residential development)</i>	Open space per dwelling unit: 75 square feet <i>Open space is reduced from 150 square feet per dwelling under adjacent H2 zoning.</i>	Open space per dwelling unit: 75 square feet	Open space per dwelling unit: 75 square feet	Open space per dwelling unit: 75 square feet

## DENSITY AND DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

	<b>Fenway South Boylston Neighborhood</b>	<b>Fenway North Boylston Neighborhood</b>	<b>Fenway Triangle Mixed-Use</b>	<b>Brookline Avenue Commercial</b>
<b>Maximum Allowable Single Retail Use on Ground Floor:</b> <i>Maximum single retail use is limited to promote a variety in use and to enhance the pedestrian environment. Retail space can expand to the upper floors.</i>	15,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area allowed/ 30,000 square feet GFA conditional  Supermarkets may be a maximum of 50,000 square feet GFA	15,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area allowed/ 30,000 square feet GFA conditional  Supermarkets may be a maximum of 50,000 square feet GFA	35,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area  Supermarkets may be a maximum of 50,000 square feet GFA	35,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area  Supermarkets may be a maximum of 50,000 square feet GFA
<b>Parking Requirements:</b>	0.75 spaces per unit residential (minimum/ maximum) 0.75 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. (GFA) for commercial (no minimum requirement)	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood
<b>Bike Parking Spaces:</b> <i>To be coordinated with the City Bicycle Advisory committee</i>	Residential: 1 per 2 units Commercial: 1 for 10 vehicle parking spaces	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood
<b>Planned Development Areas:</b>	Not Permitted	Permitted under PDA Regulations	Permitted under PDA Regulations	Permitted under PDA Regulations



## DENSITY AND DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

	<b>Fenway South Boylston Neighborhood</b>	<b>Fenway North Boylston Neighborhood</b>	<b>Fenway Triangle Mixed- Use</b>	<b>Brookline Avenue Commercial</b>
<b>Projections into Setback:</b> <i>Facades should have variation in their distance from the street to break down the massing and scale of the building</i>	Up to 40% of wall can project into the setback to a maximum of 5 feet.	Up to 40% of wall can project into the setback to a maximum of 5 feet	None <i>Provide variation within property line while maintaining dominant street wall continuity</i>	None <i>Provide variation within property line while maintaining dominant street wall continuity</i>
<b>Street Wall Height:</b> <i>Walls that are located at the minimum setback should have a maximum height.</i>	6 stories or 75 feet, whichever is less <i>This allows a 15 foot first floor and five upper floors of 12 feet each.</i>	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood
<b>Stepback above Street Wall Height:</b> <i>Additional stories (above 6 stories or 75 feet) should be stepped back from the street wall.</i>	15 feet	15 feet	15 feet	15 feet
<b>Parking Areas:</b>	Parking lots should not dominate the street and should be located behind or within buildings.	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood	Same as South Boylston Neighborhood

## BONUS/INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

	<b>Fenway South Boylston Neighborhood</b>	<b>Fenway North Boylston Neighborhood</b>	<b>Fenway Triangle Mixed- Use</b>	<b>Brookline Avenue Commercial</b>
<b>Residential Bonus</b>	FAR bonus of 0.4 (total 4.4) when 50% or more of a building is residential.	FAR bonus of 0.4 (total 4.4) when 50% or more of a building is residential.	FAR bonus of 0.4 (total 4.4) when 50% or more of a building is residential.	None
<b>Affordable Housing Bonus</b>	An FAR increase of 1 sq. ft. for every square foot floor area dedicated to affordable housing on-site, up to a total FAR bonus of 20%, or FAR 5.28, provided at least 10% on-site affordable housing is provided.	An FAR increase of 1 sq. ft. for every square foot floor area dedicated to affordable housing on-site up to a total FAR bonus of 20%, or FAR 5.28, provided at least 10% on-site affordable housing is provided.	An FAR increase of 1 sq. ft. for every square foot floor area dedicated to affordable housing on-site up to a total FAR bonus of 20%, or FAR 5.28, provided at least 10% on-site affordable housing is provided.	None
<b>Proposed Parking Bonus</b> <i>for future discussion</i>	Up to 5% additional parking spaces (maximum of 10 spaces) for dedicated shared-use vehicle, alternative fuel, or carpool vehicles.	Up to 5% additional parking spaces (maximum of 10 spaces) for dedicated shared-use vehicle, alternative fuel, or carpool vehicles.	Up to 5% additional parking spaces (maximum of 10 spaces) for dedicated shared-use vehicle, alternative fuel, or carpool vehicles.	Up to 5% additional parking spaces (maximum of 10 spaces) for dedicated shared-use vehicle, alternative fuel, or carpool vehicles.



Proposed Streetscape: Boylston Street

# URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## INTRODUCTION

The proposed zoning recommendations for the West Fenway District define the basic parameters for the redevelopment of the Fenway Special Study Areas – the Brookline, Boylston, and Lansdowne Street corridors – and the creation of the active, pedestrian-friendly mixed-use urban village that is the goal of this rezoning and urban design effort. These regulations, as defined in four proposed sub-districts, establish standards for use, density, height, and setbacks that vary among the subdistricts, recognizing such things as proximity to existing residential use, relationship of height and massing to existing street widths and nearby open spaces, and the current and desired distribution of land uses across the district.

The Urban Design Guidelines proposed here carry these basic regulatory parameters to the next step. Along with the streetscape design recommendations, which will define the character of the public realm – the streets and sidewalks of the District, the Urban Design Guidelines define in more detail the desired physical character of new development. They address such issues as the scale and character of front setback areas and the pedestrian realm within those setbacks, the character and continuity of the street wall, and opportunities to create appropriately scaled variations in building height and massing.

Developed through an iterative public review process, these Urban Design Guidelines are intended to respond to the expressed goals of the Fenway Planning Task Force, its Urban Design Subcommittee, and members of the community. The Urban Design Guidelines also take into account the perspective of the study team's economic development

consultants, who have reviewed the recommendations to ensure that they are consistent with the financial realities of development in the Fenway neighborhood within the context of the larger Boston development environment.

The new zoning will establish regulations on height, density (FAR), and setback. These regulations are supplemented by more flexible but clearly articulated design guidelines and dimensional goals and criteria for building articulation and massing, by which proposed developments in the Fenway can be measured and evaluated in the approval process.

## BUILDING HEIGHT

The zoning recommendations establish varied basic building heights for the new zoning subdistricts of 6 stories for the South Boylston Street Neighborhood Subdistrict, and 8 stories for the other three subdistricts. It is further recommended that these story heights be paired with height limits, as follows:

### **South Boylston Street Neighborhood Subdistrict:**

6 stories or 75 feet, whichever is less

**Other subdistricts:** 8 stories or 95 feet, whichever is less

The height limits, which allow taller buildings north of Boylston Street, respond to the preferences expressed at the community Visioning Workshop held in May of 2000. While building heights may rise above 6 stories or 75 feet north of Boylston Street, the limitation on street wall height at 6 stories/75 feet requires that any additional height be stepped back from the street wall.



The height limits take into account the desired mixed-use nature of development in the Fenway district, with retail uses anticipated on the ground floor at street level, and either office or residential uses, or both, above. Ground floor retail uses typically require a floor-to-floor height of 15 feet; office uses often require 12 feet floor-to-floor, while residential uses can generally be accommodated in a 10 foot or 10'-6" story height. Thus, a six-story building with ground floor retail and five floors of office use would require a 75-foot height limit. Only 20 additional feet are allowed for the additional two stories (for 8 story buildings) under the theory that such additional stories are desired – and expected – to be residential.

### **Residential FAR and Height Bonus**

The Zoning Recommendations allow a building that is more than 50 percent residential by Gross Floor Area a 10% increase in FAR (from 4.0 to 4.4), and an additional height of two stories. This recognizes that residential uses typically have a smaller footprint than commercial (office or retail) uses, and thus, for a given FAR, require more height to achieve the allowable density. Various massing studies indicate that, for residential construction on urban sites such as those in the Fenway District, each FAR of 1.0 equates to two floors of building height. The **residential height bonus** is one means by which a variation in building heights can be achieved in the district.

The residential height bonus is further subject to the Zoning Recommendation that establishes a maximum street wall height of 6 stories/ 75 feet (whichever is less), so that the additional two stories would be required to be stepped back 15 feet from the street wall. This requirement allows buildings to rise beyond 6 stories without looming directly over the street. It also encourages the creation of penthouse-type or maisonette-type units on the upper floors of a residential (or mixed-use) building, with substantial terraces, either for private or common resident use.

## **City of Boston's Policy on Affordable Housing**

Executive Order 2/ 29/00

The City and Boston Redevelopment Authority have established an inclusionary development policy in order to promote the production of affordable housing in Boston. Any proposed housing project that is 1) undertaken or financed by any agency of the City of Boston or the BRA or to be developed on property owned by the City of Boston or the BRA that includes 10 units or more, or 2) any housing project that includes 10 or more units of housing and requires zoning relief shall be subject to the inclusionary development policy. The policy requires that no less than 10% of the units in the proposed project shall be made affordable to moderate-income (up to 80% of median income) and middle-income (between 80% and 120% of median income) households. The policy provides the developer with three options.

### **1. Affordable Housing Creation On-Site**

Of the 10% affordable units, 50% of the units shall be affordable to incomes below 80% of median income. No more than 50% shall be affordable to incomes between 80% and 120% of median income, provided that on average these middle-income units are affordable to households earning 100% of median income.

### **2. Affordable Housing Creation Off-Site**

Subject to the approval of the Director of the BRA, the developer may choose to create 15% of the total number of units off-site. Fifty percent (50%) of the off-site units shall be affordable to households earning below 80% of median income. The remaining 50% shall be affordable to households earning between 80% and 120% of median income, provided that on average these middle-income units are affordable to households earning 100% of median income.

### **3. Cash-Out**

Subject to the approval of the Director of the BRA, the developer may propose to meet its affordable housing obligations by making a dollar contribution. This is calculated by multiplying the total number of units by 15% and the resulting number by an affordable housing cost factor, currently standing at \$52,000. The affordable housing cost factor is adjusted annually on July 1st

These rooftop terraces are also important components – along with building setback areas – in meeting the usable open space requirements for residential development. The usable open space standard proposed for the West Fenway district – at 75 square feet per dwelling unit – is less than the underlying zoning standard of 150 square feet per dwelling unit, in the hope of encouraging residential development in this dense urban area.

### Affordable Housing Bonus

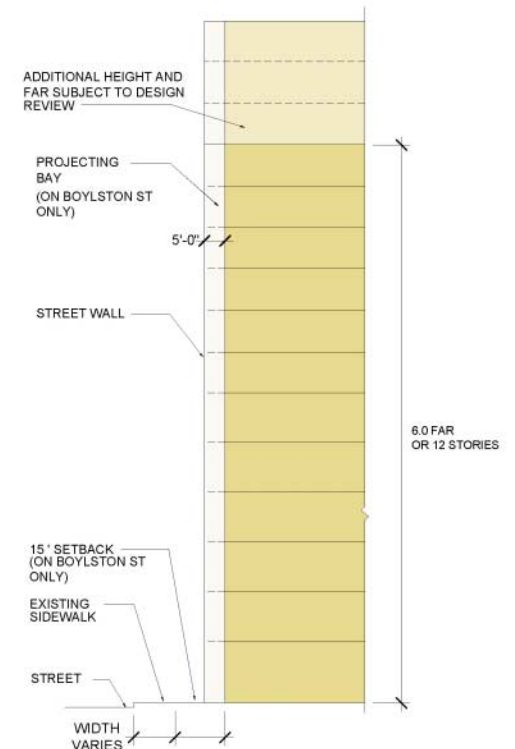
In addition to the Residential FAR Bonus described above, developments providing a minimum of 10% on-site affordable housing can receive a further FAR bonus. The **Affordable Housing Bonus** allows an additional square foot of floor area for every square foot of a project dedicated to affordable housing, up to a total additional FAR of 20%, provided that a minimum of 10% on-site affordable housing is created. Added to the 4.4 FAR allowed for projects that are more than 50% residential, this equates to a total FAR of 5.28 ( $4.4 \times 1.2$ ). This bonus encourages the development of projects with at least 10% and up to 20% on-site affordable housing. Additional building height to accommodate this FAR increase would be subject to Article 80 design review.

The intent of this bonus is to encourage the development of **mixed-income** residential projects, not stand-alone affordable housing projects, which generally require some form of public development subsidy, such as tax credits.

### Gateway Parcels

Another means to promote a variation in building heights is the designation of two **Gateway Parcels**, where additional density and building height are allowed, at a base density standard of FAR 6.0, with a 12 story height limit. The usable open space and upper story stepback requirements would be waived for these parcels. The Gateway Parcel designation would allow additional height up to a specified number for projects that undergo Large Project Review. Special consideration will

### Gateway Parcel Dimensional Guidelines



be given to buildings whose use and design respond to the unique conditions and dimensional constraints of the Gateway Parcel sites.

As identified on the zoning map, these parcels are located at key entry points to the neighborhood, where buildings of special design character would have high visibility and could become neighborhood landmarks. The sites are also relatively small, suggesting that additional building height could be allowable in return for a slim profile of architectural distinction. Shadows and other environmental impacts, especially on nearby residential properties or open space, will be key considerations in reviewing requests for additional building height and/or density for buildings proposed on Gateway Parcels.

As presently designated, the Gateway parcels are likely to have relatively minor shadow impacts on nearby open space or residential uses. Other concerns that will require analysis include the amount of additional traffic that might be generated by a dense project on a relatively small site, and how service and parking are handled.

### **Parks and Recreation Commission Review of Gateway Parcels**

In addition to zoning regulations and BRA Design Review, Gateway Parcel 2 is subject to the review of the Boston Parks and Recreation Commission, under Section 7-4 of the City of Boston Code, by virtue of its location within 100 feet of Park Drive and/or the Back Bay Fens. (Gateway Parcel 1 is more than 100 feet from these features and is not subject to this review.)

Section 7-4.10 generally prohibits “mercantile and manufacturing” uses from these parcels, suggesting that residential use is the preferred development option, and limits the height of structures on these parcels to 70 feet, “exclusive of such steeples, towers, domes, cornices, parapets, balustrades, sculptured ornaments, chimneys and roofs as the Parks and Recreation Commission shall approve.” Gateway Parcel 2, the current TNT Building and its site bounded by Ipswich Street, Charlesgate West, and Boylston Street, is specifically exempted from the prohibition on mercantile use, no doubt because the property is already in such use.

Section 7-4.12 imposes setback requirements for segments of Park Drive and Boylston Street. For Boylston Street, a 15 foot setback is required on the south side of the street between Hemenway Street and the Fenway, which is what already exists in that area.

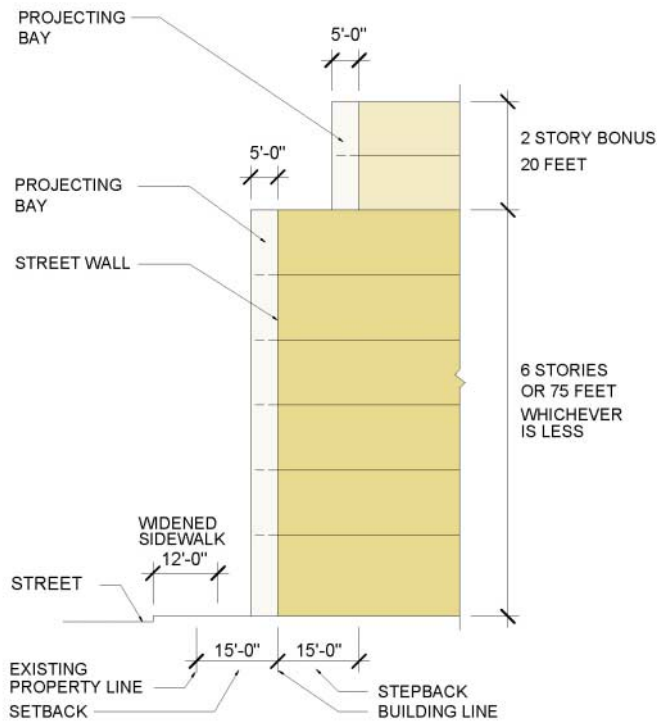
In addition to the above specific restrictions, under Section 7-4.11, the written approval of the Parks and Recreation Commission is required before any building can be erected on properties near parks and parkways, as defined above. However, the restrictions described above are generally considered to apply when the vehicular entrance to the property is from the street fronting parkland – in this case, Boylston Street for Parcel 2. Developments with vehicular access (to garages or for drop-offs) not fronting the adjacent parkland may not be subject to these specific height and use restrictions, although Parks and Recreation Commission review and approval are still required by Section 7-4.11.

### **SETBACKS**

The major streets in the West Fenway district – Boylston, Brookline, and Lansdowne – present distinctly different characters in terms of their existing cross-section, traffic operations, pedestrian amenity, and the uses they currently support. They also differ in the extent to which buildings are currently set back from the street line, and in how the Zoning Recommendations treat proposed setback areas for future development.

The following describes guidelines for setbacks and other urban design elements on each of these streets, with particular attention to Boylston Street, as well as for possible new streets within the district. In addition to the usual reasons for providing setbacks from existing property lines for new development, the periodic heavy pedestrian volumes resulting from the presence of Fenway Park suggest that extra consideration be given to providing adequate circulation space in the pedestrian realm – on both the public and private sides of the street sidewalks.

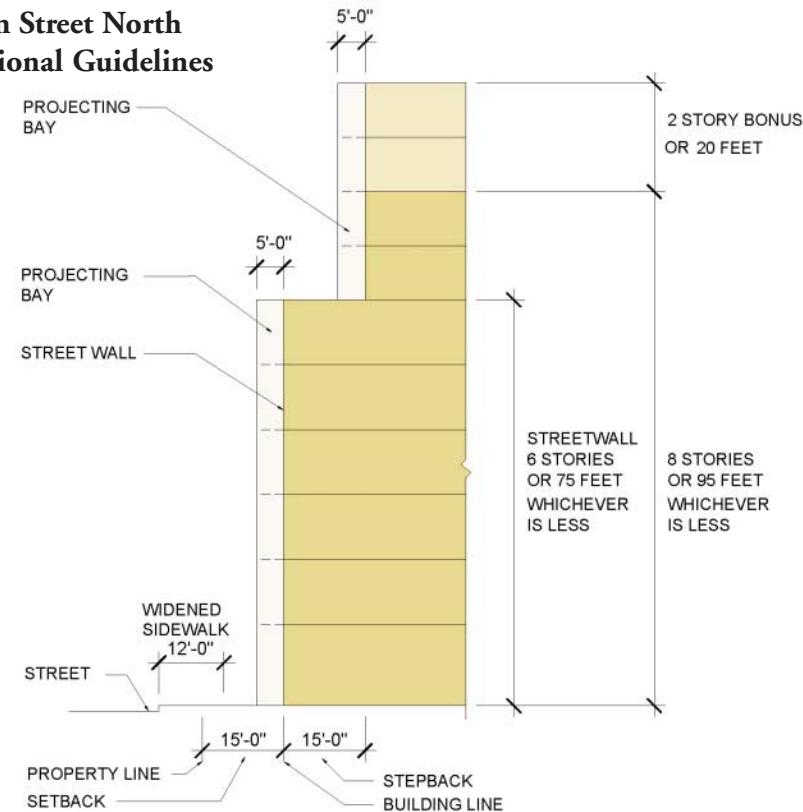
### Boylston Street South Dimensional Guidelines



### Boylston Street

Of the three primary Special Study Area corridors, Boylston Street – the West Fenway’s “Main Street” today, and future focus of an urban village — offers the greatest opportunities for improvement. Unlike the other two Special Study Area street corridors, buildings on Boylston Street are currently set back from the property line by 15 feet on both sides of the street, adding this space to the relatively narrow 8-foot public sidewalks. Much of this additional setback space is paved with concrete and contiguous with the public sidewalks. The wide pedestrian realm is a combination of public and private space, and is currently rather barren, since there are no street trees and very little other landscaping along Boylston Street. The lack of street trees is partly because there are

### Boylston Street North Dimensional Guidelines



underground gas lines directly under the sidewalk area on the north side of the street, where street trees would normally be planted.

The relocation of the gas lines and the installation of the street trees are critical components of the streetscape improvements to be funded by the construction of a new Fenway Park. With these improvements, Boylston Street can become an active, pedestrian friendly, tree-lined, urban boulevard, linking two major open spaces. Creating this important urban connection is a goal of the city and the community, independent of the construction of a new Ball Park.



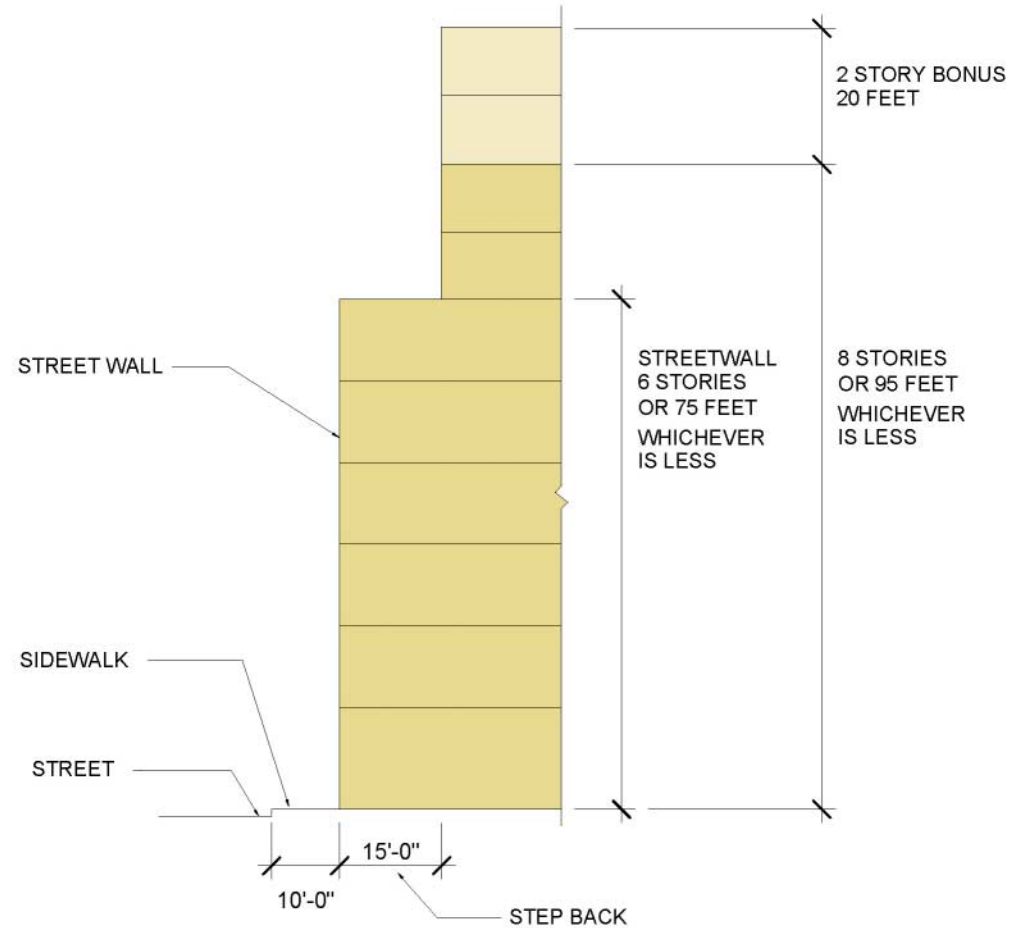
The recommended reconstruction plan for Boylston Street will maintain its current cross-section of four traffic lanes and parking on each side, and will widen the street from its current curb-to-curb width of 64 feet to meet Boston Transportation Department standards for accommodating bicycles along widened outside travel lanes.

Installation of street trees in the current 8-foot sidewalks will reduce the usable public sidewalk to an unacceptable four feet – less if the street is widened. Fortunately, the adjacent 15-foot setbacks, which are typical on both sides of the street, provide a means of resolving this problem.

The Urban Design Guidelines propose a treatment of building setbacks along Boylston Street that is consistent with, and further refines, the uses of the existing 15 foot setback. The current 15 foot setbacks along Boylston Street are to remain. Within this setback area, a combination of widened sidewalks, projecting bays, landscape treatment and other streetscape amenities, and – most important – active ground floor retail use, should create a pedestrian-friendly public realm with the scale, character, and activity of an urban village.

### Brookline Avenue

There is currently no required setback for Brookline Avenue, and with the exception of a few properties, buildings are located at the property line, with 10-foot sidewalks. New development should generally respect the existing street wall. However, opportunities to improve the pedestrian environment, such as by increased building setbacks (as proposed by the Fenway Mixed-Use development), should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.



**Brookline Avenue  
Dimensional Guidelines**

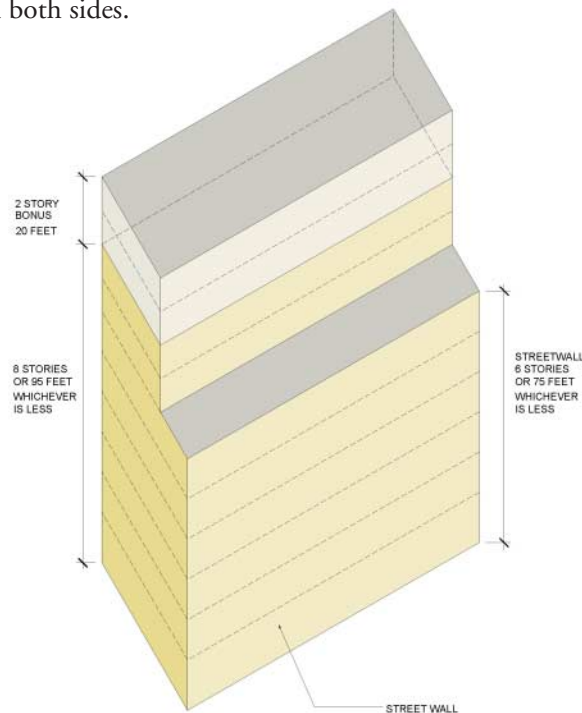
### Lansdowne Street

Similar to Brookline Avenue, Lansdowne Street buildings are located at the property line. When redevelopment occurs, the new building line should typically allow for 10-foot sidewalks, achieved by narrowing the street width to 30 feet within an existing overall 50 foot right-of-way, while maintaining the continuity of the street wall.

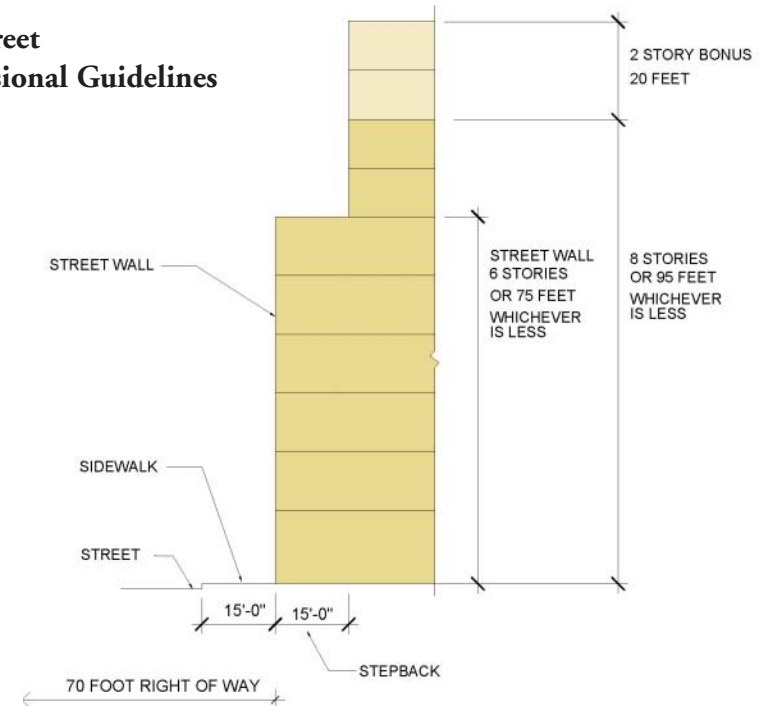
### Internal Streets

New streets north of Boylston Street that may be built in the Fenway Triangle Mixed-Use Subdistrict and existing internal streets should have sidewalks set at the City's desired width of 15 feet. The typical right-of-way for the new streets should be 70 feet, comprised of a 40 foot street width, with a 15 foot sidewalk on each side. This will allow for a two-way street with parking on both sides.

### Brookline Avenue and New Street Dimensional Guidelines



### New Street Dimensional Guidelines



### **Widened Sidewalks On Boylston Street**

The Urban Design Guidelines propose to reserve a section of the existing 15 foot setback for a widened sidewalk area that is contiguous with, consistent with, and fully accessible from, the existing public sidewalk. This proposed dedication of private space to public use is balanced by the opportunity to create additional developable space within the required setback through the use of projecting bays.

The widened sidewalk area is proposed to be no more than 8 feet wide, no less than 4 feet wide, and preferably 6 feet wide. This dimension should be reviewed after a final determination of street width is made for Boylston Street, and may vary in the near term in certain locations due to existing conditions. In combination with the available usable public sidewalk, estimated to be no more than 4 feet on each side after street trees are installed, this widened sidewalk area will allow a minimum of 8 feet, and more generally 10 to 12 feet, of usable pedestrian space.



The public sidewalk and the building setback join seamlessly to create an inviting and successful pedestrian environment.

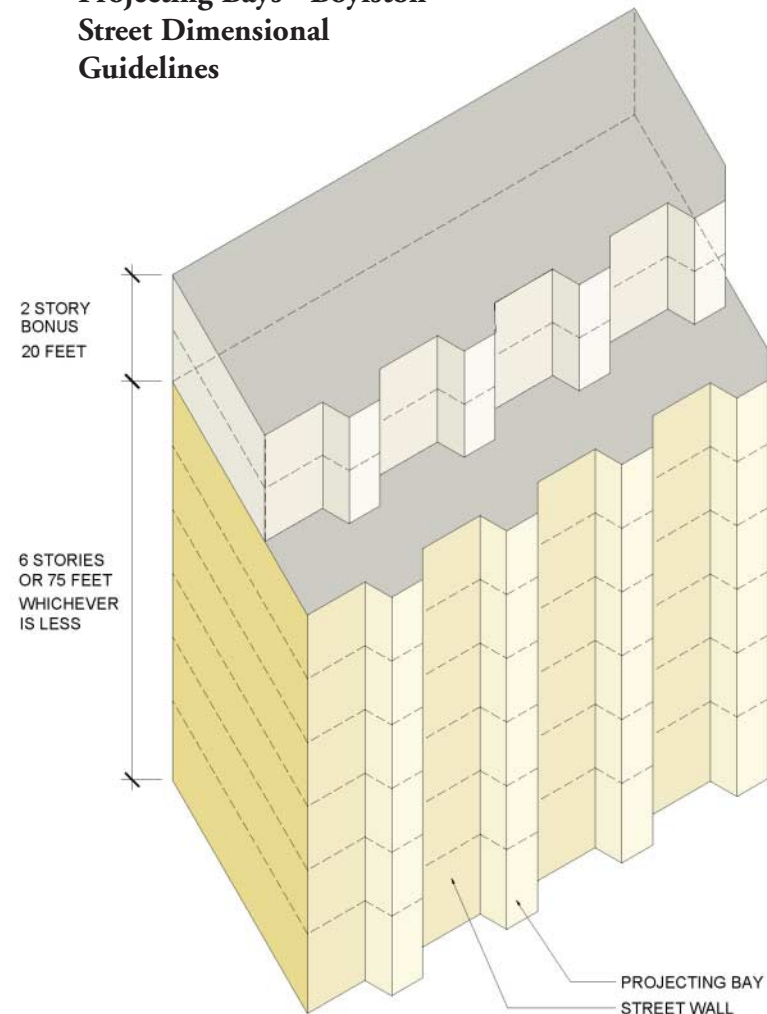
## **PROJECTING BAYS**

The recommended allowance for projecting bays for new development along Boylston Street balances the requirement that public access be maintained in the proposed widened sidewalk in the setback area. Such bays are currently not allowed within the setback. While it is important that the primary building line be maintained at the 15-foot setback line, the proposed bays will create opportunities for a more pedestrian-friendly scale and three-dimensional articulation of the building frontages that will be developed along the street, to achieve one of the urban design goals of this study.

These bays should be limited to a maximum depth of 5 feet to provide appropriate three-dimensional character without extending too far into the setback area. On the other, narrower streets in the district, where there is no required setback, bays would only be allowed within the property line.

As a general guideline, bays should occupy no more than 40 percent of a building's frontage. For properties with extensive frontage – more than 55 feet – multiple smaller bays should be provided, rather than a long continuous projection. (This may not be practical or desirable for narrower lots.) Projecting bays may meet the ground, and may rise the full height of the building, up to the allowable street wall line, typically six stories or 75 feet, whichever is less. To ensure that good pedestrian visibility is maintained along building frontages, rounded bays or bays with angled returns to the building façade rather than perpendicular returns are preferred, especially for bays that extend the full 5 feet.

### **Projecting Bays - Boylston Street Dimensional Guidelines**





## LANDSCAPE TREATMENT

Proposed guidelines for landscape treatment of the front yard setbacks along Boylston Street take into account that some of the 15-foot setback will be devoted to a widened sidewalk, and some to projecting bays. Some of the remaining area will be devoted to active public uses, such as sidewalk cafes, outdoor bookstalls, etc. Access will also need to be maintained to building entries, and for retail uses, continuous access along the building façade for window shopping and getting from one entry to the next is an important consideration.



Planters within the setback are an amenity that can help to define semi-private space and provide an identifying frontage to the building or use.

For setback areas not allocated to such other purposes, careful consideration to landscape treatment should be given. Setback areas *not allocated to other specific uses*, as described above (widened sidewalks, outdoor cafés, access and circulation) may be further landscaped,

consistent with the overall character of Boylston Street. This treatment could include additional street trees matching those in the public sidewalk area, specimen trees, planting beds, or freestanding, seasonal potted plant treatments, including the types of removable seasonal planted borders often used to define sidewalk cafes. Hardscape elements, including water features, environmental art, and other decorative features are also encouraged.

## THE STREET WALL

The scale and character of the street wall are discussed above in the sections regarding building height and massing, including the description of projecting bays. The fundamental goal of the Urban Design Guidelines for the street wall is to control its height and continuity, the two most important parameters that define the scale and shape of the public realm.

### Street Wall Continuity

Although proposed setbacks vary along the three major street corridors, they share a common principle that a predominant street wall be established and maintained. On Boylston Street, although extensive redevelopment of the many underutilized parcels is possible, the existing setback of 15 feet will be retained. This allows adequate room for street widening and the installation of street trees, while maintaining a functional pedestrian zone and encouraging projecting bays to provide articulation of the street wall.

While no additional setback is proposed along Brookline Avenue, any new building line should provide for widened sidewalks of at least 12 feet. This will allow for the planting of street trees at curbside along the public sidewalk.

On the north side of Brookline Avenue, much of the existing building stock is expected to remain for the foreseeable future. Therefore the existing sidewalk will generally remain at a fairly limited 10 feet. An additional setback for new construction, while interrupting the continuity of the existing street wall, will result in the creation of occasional small areas of an expanded pedestrian realm, not unlike the pedestrian component of the small plaza in front of Harvard Vanguard.



Continuity of the street wall defines lower Boylston Street. Variation is provided through the use of projecting bays as well as recessed entrances.

While a portion of the new construction along Brookline Avenue at the Landmark Center is built at the property line, the sidewalk in this area has been widened to 12 feet by extending the curb 2 feet into the street. This has allowed for the planting of street trees, in 5 foot tree grates, set one foot in from the new curb line, with a reasonable amount of pedestrian space – over 8 feet from the centerline of the tree to the building face. This widened sidewalk, however, eliminated the parking along this section of the street.

New construction along Lansdowne Street may be extensive if Fenway Park is relocated. A reconstruction of Lansdowne Street within its existing 50 foot right-of-way should result in sidewalks 10 feet wide, and a street width of 30 feet.

Any new streets that would be created if Fenway Park is relocated, should provide sidewalks 15 feet wide within a 70 foot right-of-way. New development along Lansdowne Street should also provide 15 foot sidewalks. Additional pedestrian spaces, called “corner circulation spaces,” are also proposed in this area. These are described further below, in the section devoted to the Pedestrian Zone.

### **Street Wall Height**

As described above, a consistent street wall height of six stories, or 75 feet, whichever is less, is proposed throughout the district, except in Gateway parcels. This will establish a consistent street section throughout the district. Buildings with predominantly residential use may rise to eight stories on the south side of Boylston Street, and any building may rise to eight stories north of Boylston Street, but these additional stories must be stepped back 15 feet from the street wall. Projecting bays may rise to the full street wall height of six stories.

### **PARKING LOTS**

To enhance the aesthetic of the streets in the Fenway Special Study area, parking lots should be prohibited between the street and the buildings or at the front of the lots adjacent to the street. The preferred parking solution is below-grade garages, entered from side streets in the district where possible. Where surface parking is provided, parking lots should be located at the rear of lots, behind buildings. Adequate screening and landscaping should be required where parking lots can be seen from the street. Curb cuts to these parking lots should be limited to preserve an uninterrupted pedestrian environment along the street.

## NEW STREETS

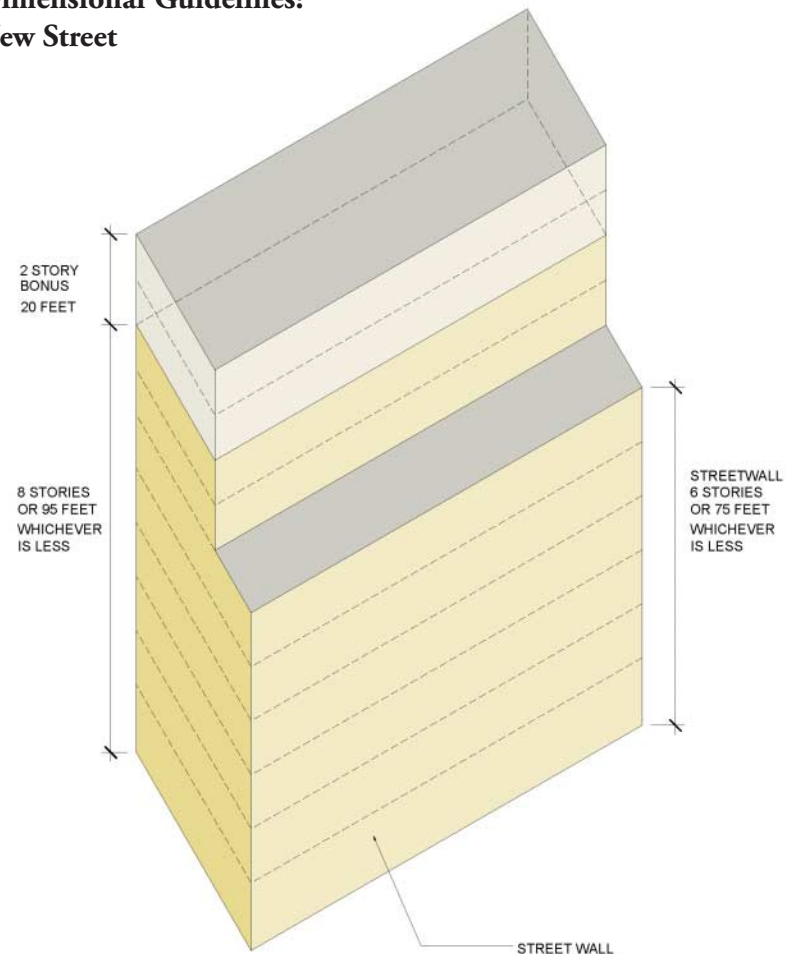
If Fenway Park is relocated, several new streets may be created in the district, mostly within the Fenway Triangle Mixed-Use Subdistrict. Some of these streets will replace existing streets that would be abandoned to construct the new ballpark, and are indicated on the Red Sox proposal for the Ballpark project. One of these streets is a relocated Yawkey Way, which will connect the current Yawkey Way to the intersection of Van Ness and Ipswich Streets. Two other proposed streets will connect the relocated Yawkey Way to Boylston Street between the current Yawkey Way and Ipswich.

In addition, Kilmarnock Street will be extended to Brookline Avenue and aligned to meet Fullerton Street, between the proposed ballpark site and the Fenway Mixed-Use Project. Another new street, connecting Brookline Avenue to Beacon Street in the Brookline Avenue Commercial Subdistrict, will provide access to the proposed Red Sox parking garages and related development in this area.

The relocation of Fenway Park will also create a large parcel of developable land between the south side of Lansdowne Street (where the Green Monster currently sits) and the north side of the relocated Yawkey Way. It is proposed that this parcel be subdivided into three roughly equal parcels by two additional new streets, as shown on the Study Area plan. This would be accomplished by extending new streets through the parcel that align with one of the new streets linking New Yawkey Way to Boylston, and by extending the right-of-way of Ipswich Street through to Lansdowne, although Ipswich Street itself bends around past the Fenway Arts Academy. The blocks created by these new streets would be comparable in size to the existing blocks in the Fenway district; the triangular block created where Ipswich meets Lansdowne would support a project comparable in scale to the proposed Fenway Mixed-Use Project.

The responsibility for creating these streets would be assumed by the State if the new Fenway Park project goes ahead. These streets should be developed with a typical 70 foot right-of-way. For these streets, public sidewalks should be 15 feet wide, allowing for a 40 foot street width.

### Dimensional Guidelines: New Street



## **THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT**

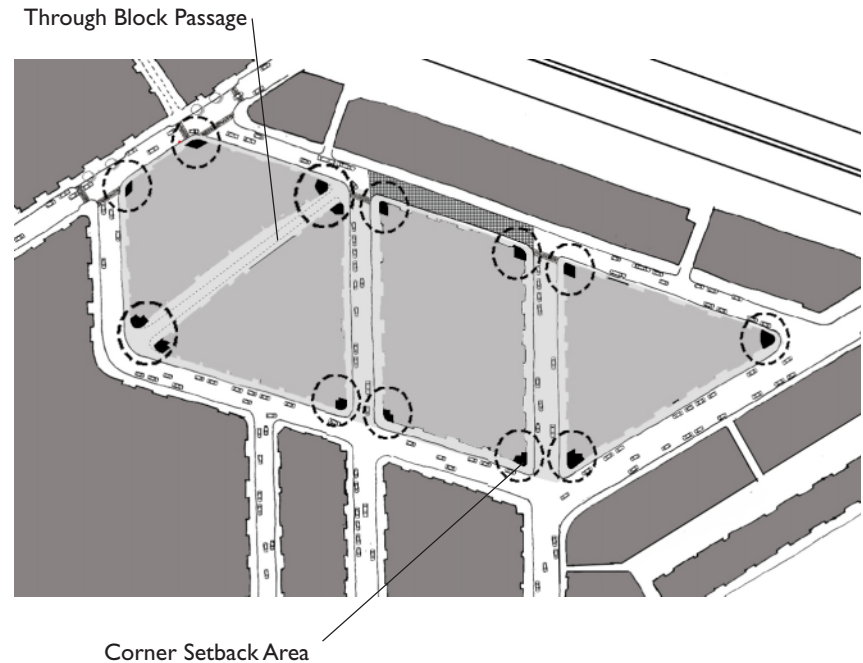
### **Lansdowne Street**

Lansdowne Street is currently one very long block running one way from Brookline Avenue to Ipswich Street. Its location, situated between the Mass Turnpike and the Green Monster, has allowed it to evolve into a unique, lively entertainment district that is fairly well isolated from residential areas. It is currently a one-sided street with respect to activity, with the rear of the Green Monster occupying the other side.

The relocation of Fenway Park would allow Lansdowne Street to become a two-sided mixed-use and entertainment area, with new development possible on the south side of the street. New development may also occur on the north side of the street, with at least one potential project linked to the Mass Pike Air Rights development process. The new streets proposed to intersect Lansdowne would break the current long block into three shorter blocks, potentially easing traffic congestion along the street by providing alternate circulation routes, and create new activity nodes at the new intersections.

### **Corner Circulation Spaces**

Pedestrian space in the Lansdowne Street area can also be expanded by providing “corner circulation spaces” at the new intersections created. In addition to widened sidewalks, additional setbacks are recommended at corners. The enlarged corner pedestrian spaces would also provide informal meeting and gathering places and enhance opportunities for restaurants and sidewalk cafes by increasing retail frontage at corners.

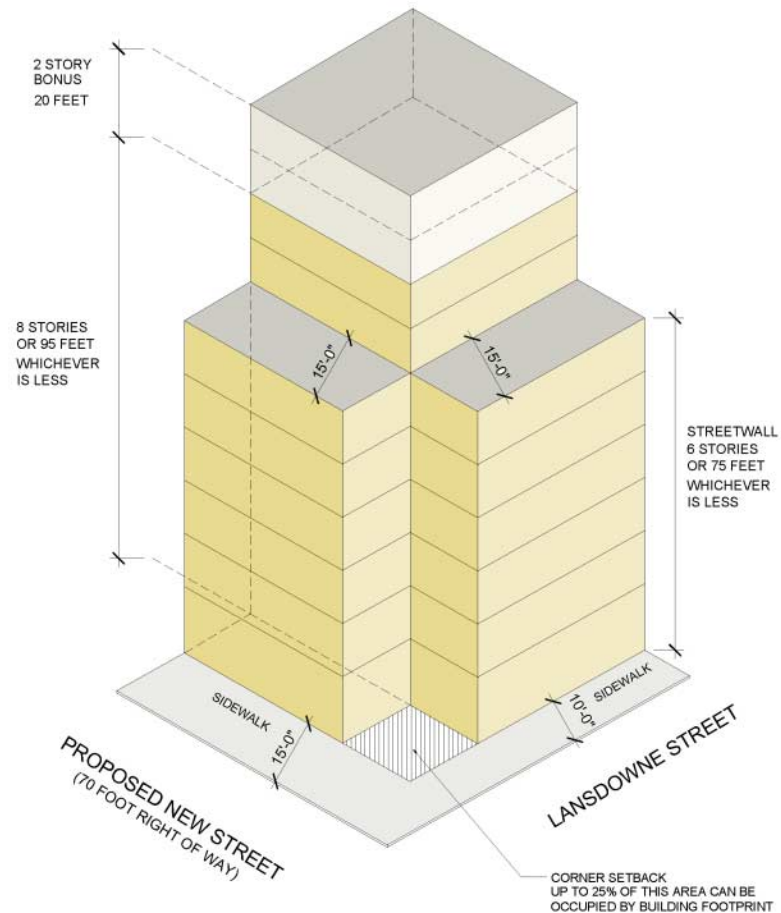


### **Enlarged Corner Pedestrian Spaces and Through Block Passage**



### Through-Block Passage

The configuration of the new development parcel close to Brookline Avenue suggests a unique opportunity to create a through-block pedestrian passage, parallel to Brookline Avenue, and linking a proposed major entry gate for the new Fenway Park with the central section of Lansdowne Street and the proposed pedestrian zone, described in the following streetscape recommendations. Whether open or enclosed, this through-block passage would provide a direct link between two major activity nodes and could become an all-weather activity node in itself. The detailed design of this passage should be subject to design review with respect to width, alignment, and materials; the overall principle should be that it be adequate to handle the substantial pedestrian traffic leaving Fenway Park after games as an alternative to the adjacent streets



**Lansdowne Street and New Streets  
Dimensional Guidelines**

# STREETSCAPE RECOMMENDATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

The Streetscape recommendations proposed here further develop some of the Urban Design elements discussed above, such as set-backs, sidewalks, and the street character. These recommendations are intended to help define the character of the public realm. They address such issues as materials and amenities, design for pedestrian safety and comfort, and the aesthetic quality of the public realm.

## PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

### Defining Pedestrian Areas

Pedestrian circulation on all streets within the Fenway District should be clearly defined and separated from vehicular traffic. Definition of the pedestrian environment should be provided through paving and amenities such as street trees, bollards, and buffers. All types of pedestrian needs such as areas of pedestrian traffic generation and various types of pedestrian flow, including handicapped accessibility, should be accommodated appropriately. Public and semi-public areas such as entrances, exits, outdoor cafés, bus shelters, seating areas, street corners and access ways are all areas that generate circulation needs beyond the minimal sidewalk. Some activity also requires room for varying speeds of pedestrian movement. Window-shopping and street corners, for example, tend to slow or stop pedestrian traffic, and sufficient space should be provided to accommodate through traffic.

### Paving Materials

Pavement treatments in the pedestrian areas should be used to distinguish public areas from semi private use of the sidewalk and setback throughout the District. High quality materials such as pavers or traditional brick are recommended and will greatly enhance the aesthetics and legibility of the streetscape environment. Paving of the Boylston Street widened sidewalk areas, particularly within 6 ft of the public sidewalk setback, must be consistent with that of the public sidewalk to denote that it is for public use. Special paving can be used to define entrances and seating areas, or semi-private space such as cafés. Granite “rumble strip” paving is recommended on either side of all crosswalk markings on Boylston Street and Brookline Avenue to slow traffic and further define pedestrian crossing areas. The crosswalks, handicapped ramps, as well as all other pedestrian areas, must be designed in full compliance with ADA and AAB guidelines to ensure handicapped accessibility.

## PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

Street furnishings help to make the street user-friendly and provide aesthetic appeal to the public pedestrian environment. Street furniture and amenities include benches, rubbish receptacles, drinking fountains, bicycle racks, and information kiosks. Street furniture should be attractive and comfortable, and must be accessible to the disabled. Benches within the public sidewalk area should be either backless or positioned perpendicular to the street, allowing their users to face public

space rather than parked cars. Furnishings should be of high quality materials and be complementary in color and style. Bus shelters should provide seating, overhead shelter and timetables, and should be incorporated into the site design where necessary. Maintenance and management of all street furnishings is critical to their success and usefulness as part of the pedestrian streetscape and urban space.

### Lansdowne Street Temporary Pedestrian Zone

The possible development of new intersecting streets would allow a portion of Lansdowne Street to be closed to vehicular traffic at times of heavy pedestrian use, such as after ball games or on weekend evenings, without disrupting traffic flow through the district. The resulting pedestrian zone on Lansdowne Street should be paved in similar material and pattern as the surrounding sidewalks to clearly indicate that pedestrians have priority on the street, even when it is open to traffic.



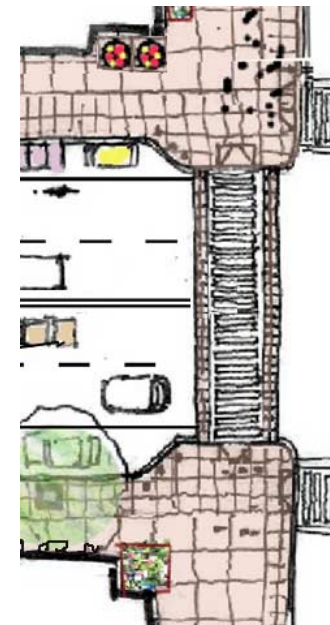
A water feature flush with a paved surface provides an attractive vehicle barrier at the end of a temporary pedestrian zone.

This zone can be closed to through traffic in a number of ways that are both functional and attractive. Fountain jet spray heads can be installed just below the paving surface at 3 foot intervals across the traffic lane at both ends, creating two interesting fountains which would still allow emergency vehicles to access the pedestrian zone. Retractable bollards or moveable gateways may be installed across the traffic lane to prohibit vehicles. Temporary barricades can be set up and supervised.

### Neckdowns

Neckdowns are recommended on Boylston Street at major intersections and pedestrian crossing points. They should be considered for Brookline Avenue as well. Neckdowns at either end of crosswalks help to shorten the road crossing distance that pedestrians must negotiate. Neckdowns will also help to slow and caution traffic at intersections by narrowing the street and creating “pinch points” where parking is disallowed. At these points the sidewalk protrudes into the parking lane, allowing motorists a clear view of pedestrians.

Neckdowns occur primarily at street corners and extend the sidewalk 6 feet into the street, for a length of up to 20 feet from the street corner. This expands the congregating space for pedestrians waiting for crossing signals and allows for the natural slowing of pedestrian speed at street corners. The projecting neckdown



Neckdowns proposed for Boylston Street.

area should be angled back toward the street curb at the beginning and end of each neckdown. Bollards should be provided at 4 ft intervals along the length of that angle to provide a clearly defined pedestrian buffer and a vehicular barrier, as well as a warning to snowplows. Pavement on neckdowns should be consistent with the sidewalk. Accessible ramps should be consistent with the most up to date codes and provided at each corner and crosswalk throughout the District.

The use of neckdowns is critical in making Boylston Street pedestrian-friendly, due to the width and volume of traffic on this street. Neckdowns are also recommended for part or all of Brookline Avenue. However, Brookline Avenue's width and lower volume of traffic does not create as critical a need. On Brookline Avenue, the use of neckdowns will be subject to the final review of the transportation study, to evaluate the tradeoffs for bus lane provisions or other transportation requirements.

### **Streetscape Amenities**

Streetscape treatment can make a visual and psychological difference in the street environment. Plantings and other amenities can help define the hierarchy and character of the streets. Formal city boulevards are often lined with large, statuesque trees, giving the street a sense of prominence, while narrower, residential streets are less formally planted, often varying in tree types and spacing. Along wider thoroughfares, several layers of streetscape are often seen. Street trees are planted to define the edge of the vehicular environment, and smaller planting such as shrubs or ornamental trees define the pedestrian environment.

There is an opportunity to utilize streetscape throughout the study area to help define the different types of streets and their character.

## **STREET TREES**

Street trees along Boylston and Lansdowne Streets will be critical in defining the street edge and the aesthetics of the pedestrian environment, and to soften the effect of solid building walls along both sides of the street. Street trees which mature to 50-70 ft height should be planted at no greater than 50 foot intervals in a staggered pattern between the two sides of the street to provide a fuller appearance.

Specimen street trees of deciduous, upright form, no less than a 24" box, should be planted in planting beds using structural soils beneath the paving. For most locations, it is likely that ornamental tree grates will be necessary to maintain sidewalk accessibility. Such grates shall be no less than 4'x6' (or 5'x5') and shall not extend more than 6 feet from the curb into the sidewalk. Where there is adequate space for open planting beds for trees, these beds should be adjacent to the curb and a minimum of 4'x6'.

Boylston Street is envisioned as a tree lined boulevard connecting major open spaces. This street would be greatly enhanced by large shade trees such as Thornless Honeylocust, Elm Zelkova, Silver Linden, Cork Tree, or Ginko. Lansdowne Street is narrower in width, as well as more pedestrian in scale. Trees that will provide buffer and delineation of the pedestrian area without overpowering the street would be appropriate here. Intermediate sized shade trees are recommended, including Green Ash or Silver and Red Maples. A mixture of two tree types would also add interest and color to the Lansdowne Street pedestrian environment. A similar treatment would be appropriate for any new streets created in the district, which may be partially residential in character.



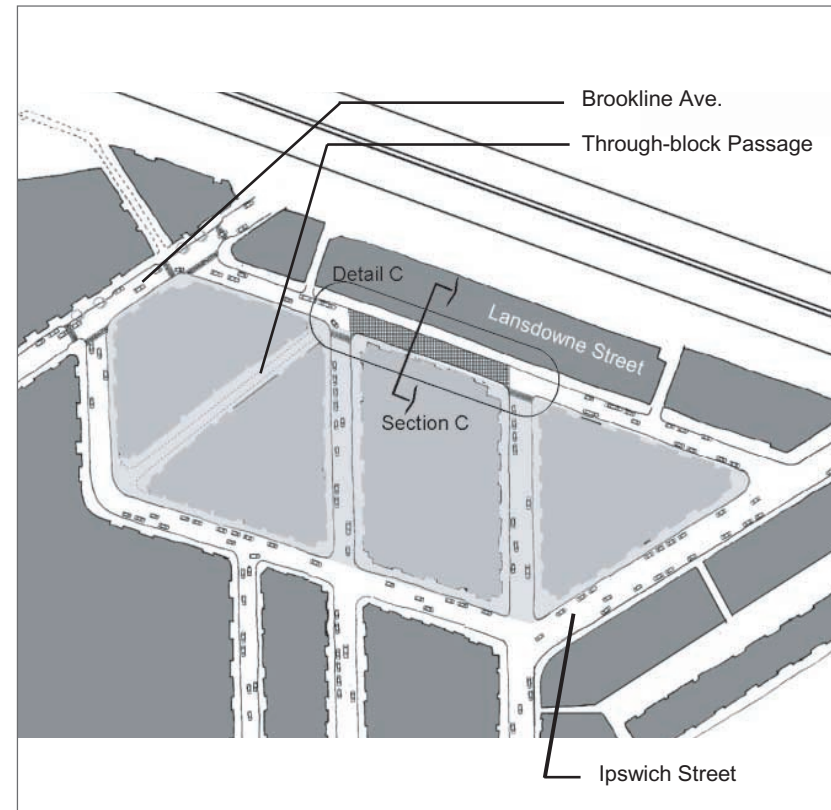
## Planters

Building setbacks can provide needed pedestrian space and also generate activity when utilized as café or temporary vendor space. However, when not used, maintained, and left vacant, paved expanses can be unsightly. It is therefore recommended that planting beds or raised planters, accompanied by other pedestrian amenities such as artwork, sculpture or benches be provided and maintained by the property owner. Planters or planting beds should be a composite minimum of 16 sq ft and provide a minimum of 1 tree (15 gallon) per planter. Trees and shrubs should be appropriate in scale and type for their location. Benches must be consistent in physical and aesthetic quality to those provided in the pedestrian right-of-way. All planters, benches and other amenities within the 15 foot setback must be kept clear of a 6 foot area adjacent to the public sidewalk.

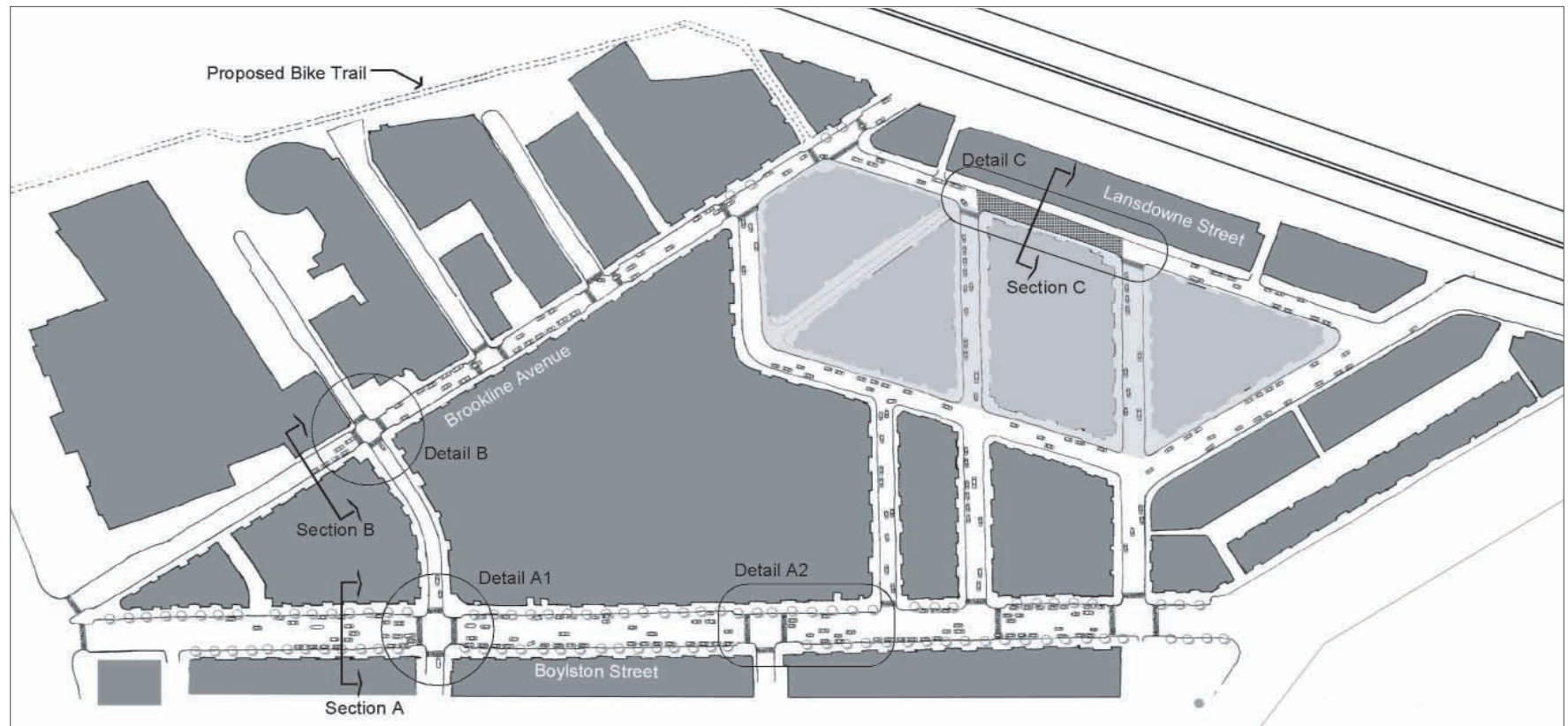
## NEW STREETS

The public sidewalks on new streets of the District are recommended to be 15 feet wide with no additional setback. As noted above, tree plantings are recommended for these streets. Along these new streets, where residential units may occupy the ground floor, a planting strip of 4 feet in depth from the building should be considered, buffering between the public pedestrian route and the residential building entrances and windows. Within this buffer, decorative shrubbery, plantings and fencing may be used to provide to provide privacy for residents of ground floor units. This buffer is consistent with the character of the existing Fenway residential neighborhood streets south of Boylston Street. The design of any planting buffers along new streets in the Fenway Triangle, however, should also take into account the overall development pattern in this area, which has yet to be established.

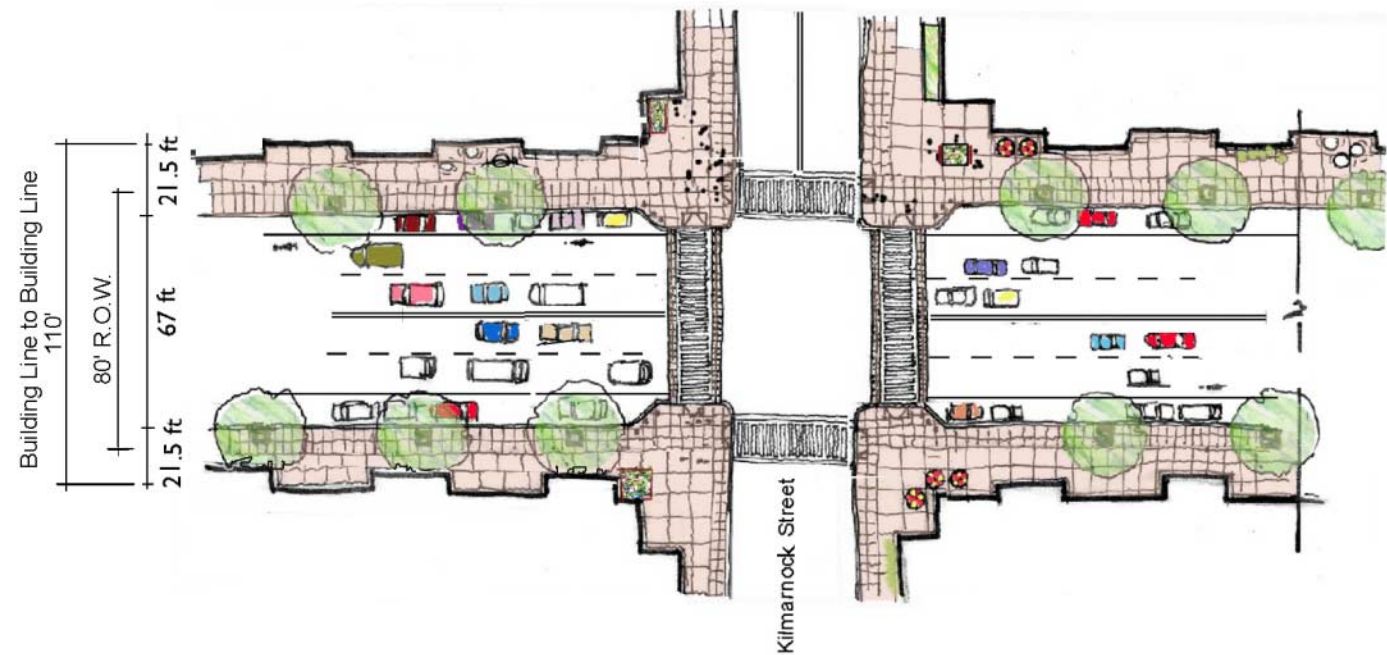
## Possible New Street Layout



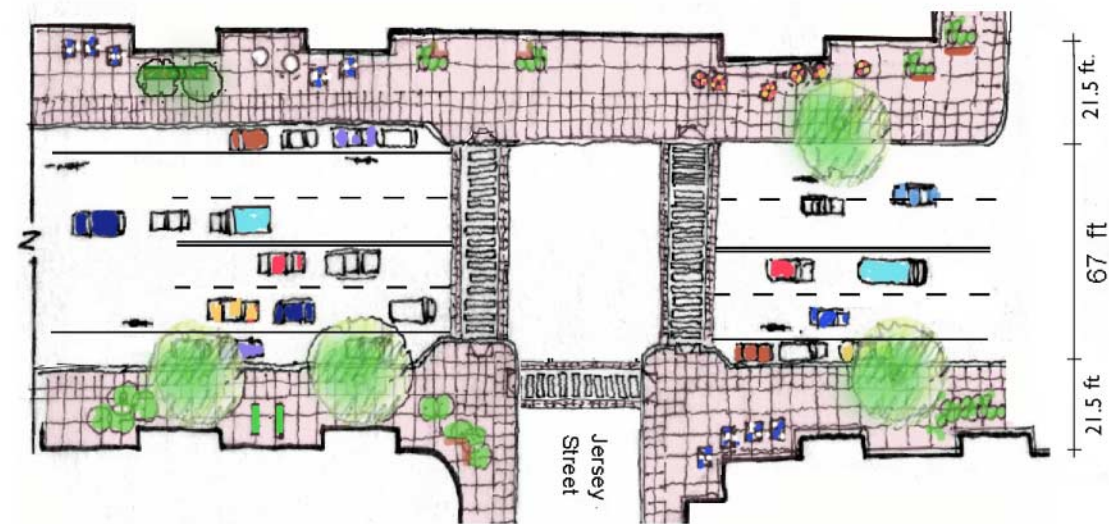
**West Fenway Landscape Improvements Plan: Key Plan**



Boylston Street  
Detail A<sub>1</sub>

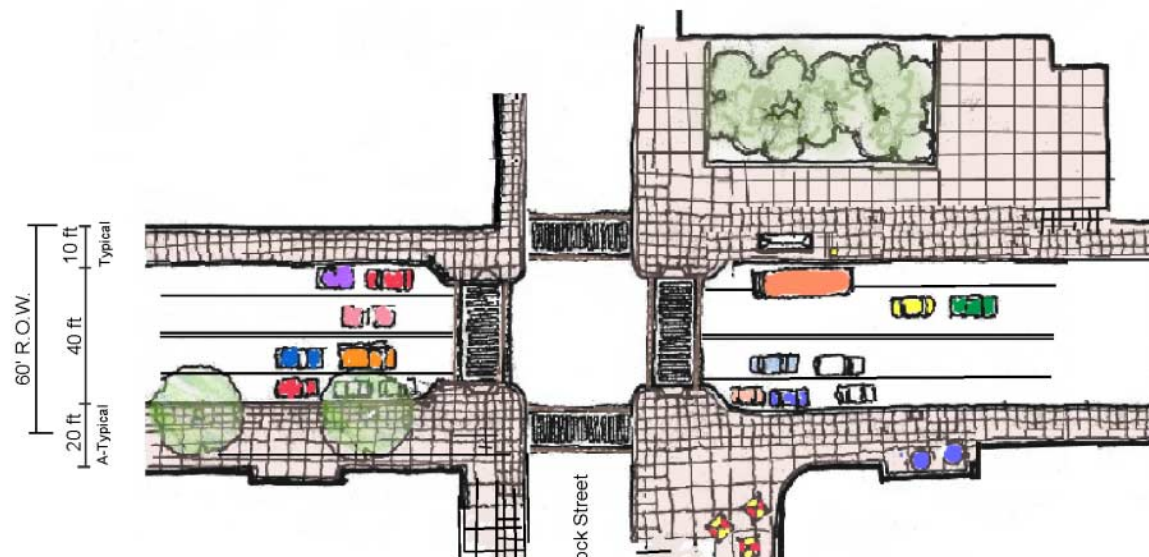


Boylston Street  
Detail A<sub>2</sub>





Brookline Avenue  
Detail B



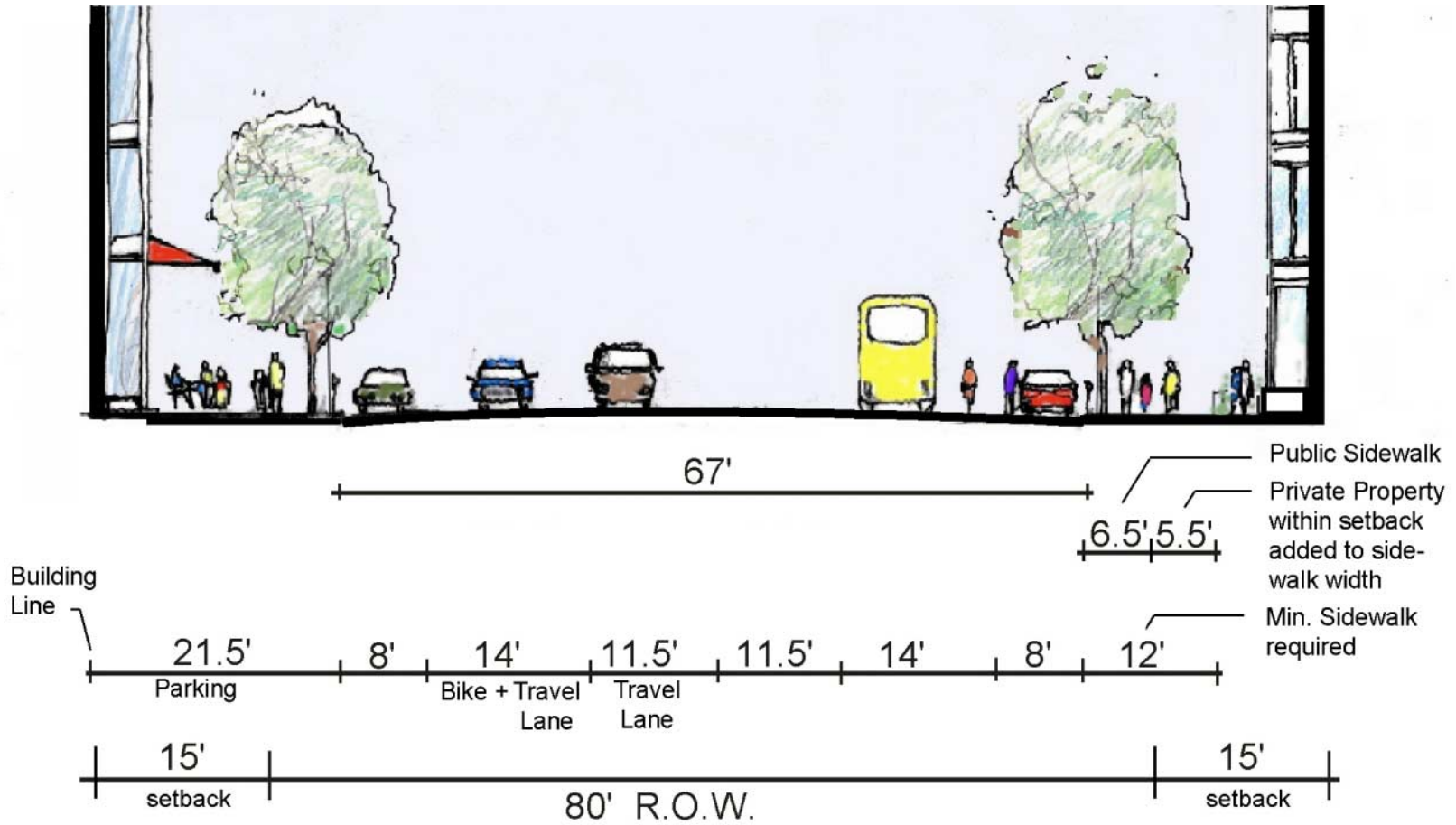
Massachusetts Turnpike

Lansdowne Street  
Detail C

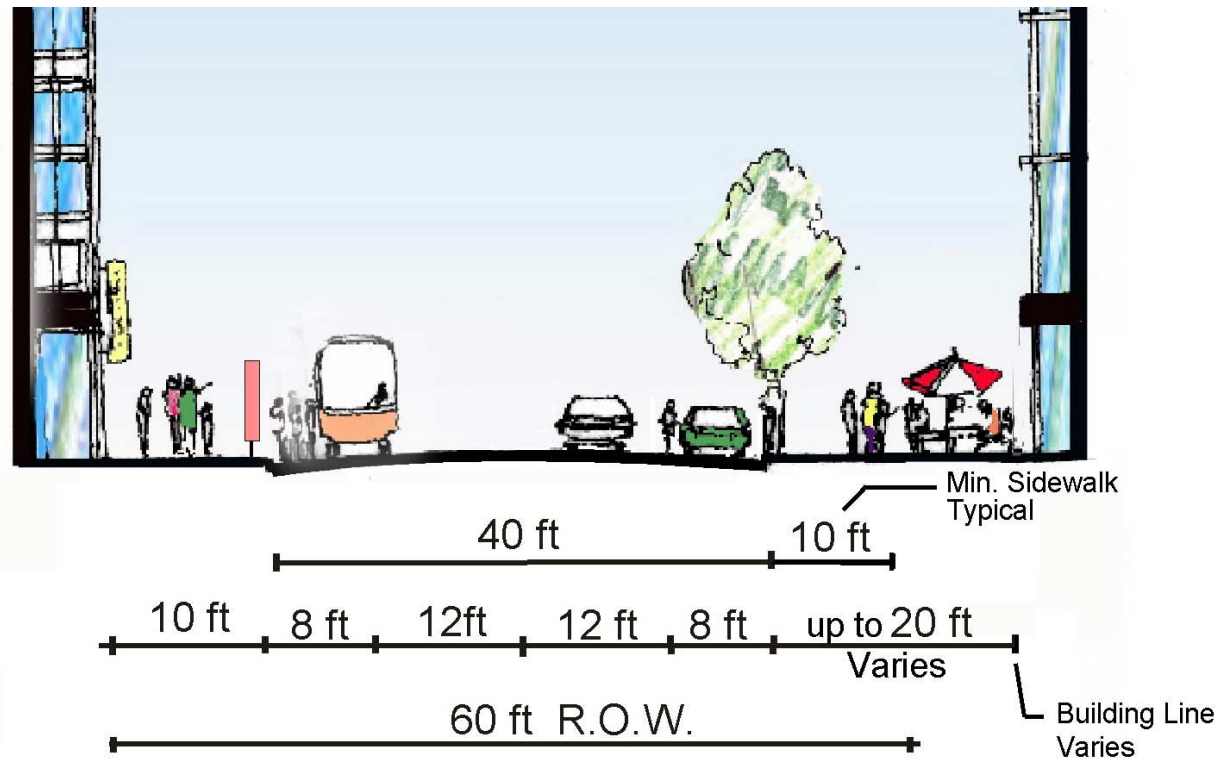




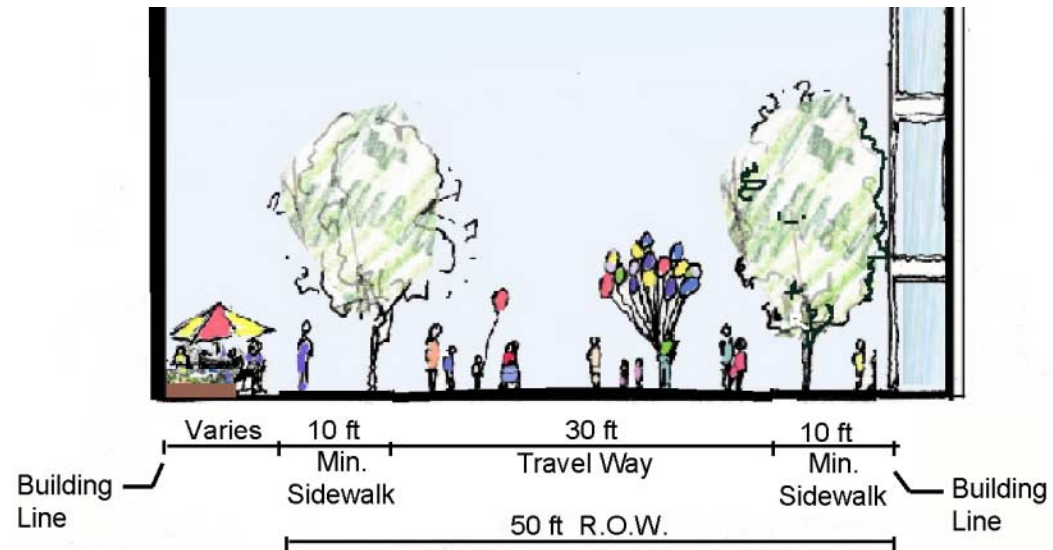
# Boylston Street Section A



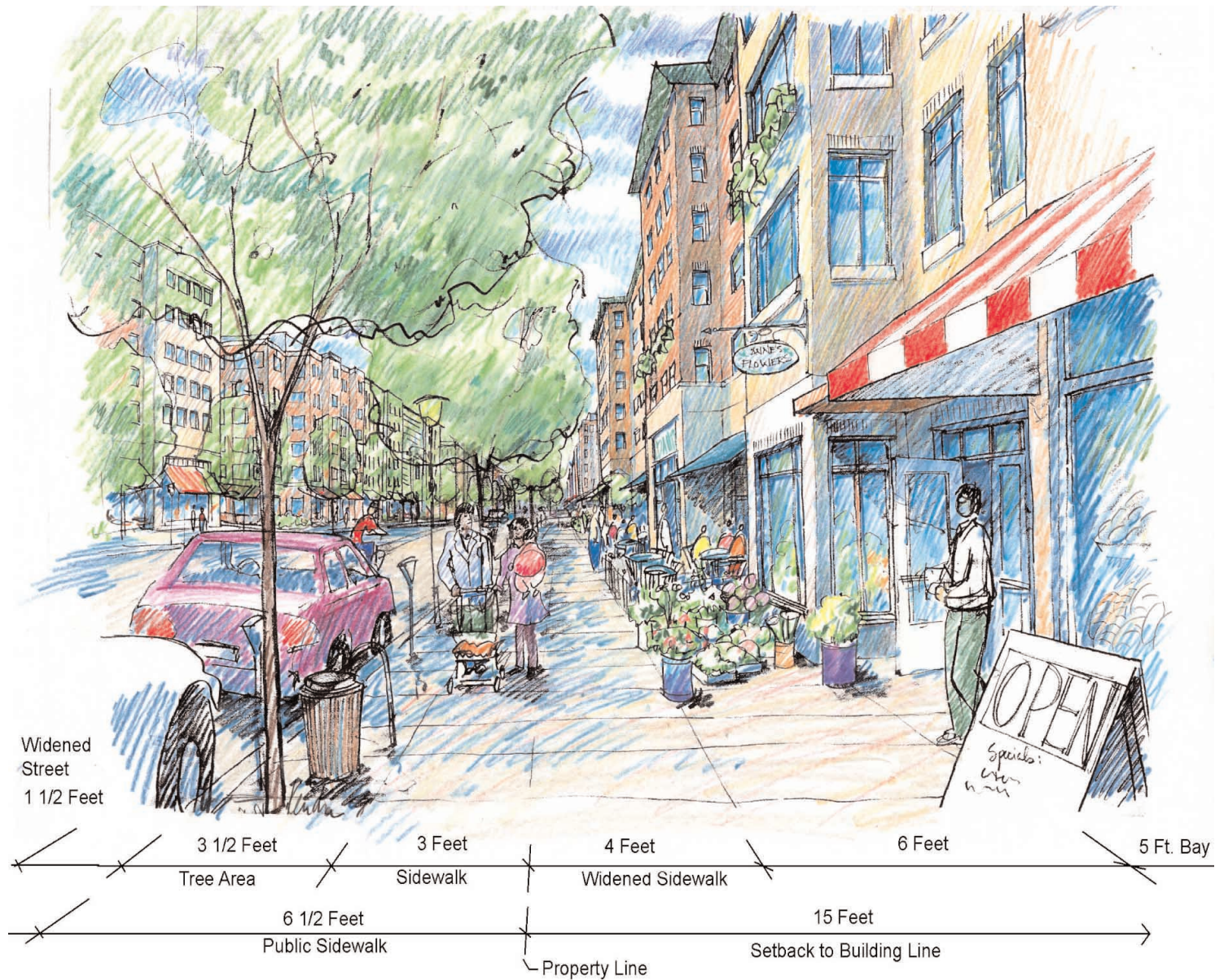
Brookline Avenue Section B



### Lansdowne Street Section C







**Proposed Dimensional Guidelines: Boylston Street**





**Boston Redevelopment Authority**

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